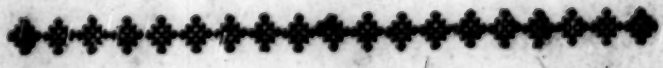


*Published 1 May 1765*



THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
Marquis DE ROSELLE.

VOL. I.



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THE

HISTORY

OF THE



MAJOR

VOL. I

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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
Marquis DE ROSELLE.

IN  
A SERIES of LETTERS.

BY  
Madam ELIE DE BEAUMONT.

Translated from the FRENCH.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT  
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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE

MARKS OF ROSS

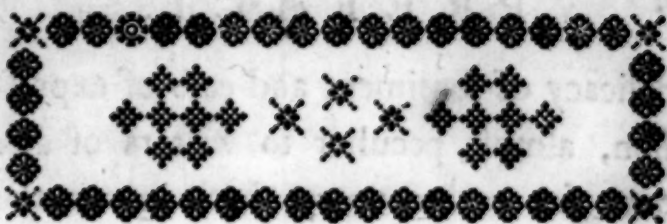
A SERIES OF LETTERS



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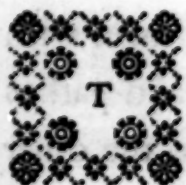
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# P R E F A C E

B Y

The TRANSLATOR.



O exhibit true and faithful pictures of life and manners ; to place Virtue in the most amiable, and Vice in the most odious light ; to deduce rational precepts from natural examples ; and to amend the heart in improving the mind : Such appears to be the truly moral design of the following letters ; in which, the ingenious Author, by displaying a  
V O L. I.                      a                      delicacy

delicacy of sentiment and ease of expression, almost peculiar to writers of her own sex and country, hath given the most convincing proofs of the powerful and pleasing efficacy of the united efforts of sense and sensibility.

Preceded by the writings of two such masters as *Richardson* and *Rousseau*, these Letters of *Madam Elie de Beaumont* will indeed lie under all the disadvantages of a partial comparison and imputed imitation. If they do not possess, however, all that spirit and vivacity we meet with in *Clarissa*, or equal the nerve and pathos we find in *Eloisa*, they are, on the other hand, neither so minute and trivial in their description, nor so prolix and tedious in their narration. With regard to construction of fable, probability of fact, and propriety of character, this work is also less exceptionable than either of the admired

admired pieces abovementioned. Again, in point of style and composition, these Letters are held, by good Judges, to be equal, if not superior, to both.

The allowed merit of this performance, therefore, will be a sufficient apology for the Translator's attempt to render it into English. As he does not flatter himself, however, that he hath always succeeded in transfusing the ease and elegance of the *original* into the *translation*, he hath only to hope, that he hath done the fair Author as little injustice as the nature of the case would admit. He must beg leave, nevertheless, to except from this insinuation, several of the Letters in the first Volume; with the translation of which he was obligingly favoured, from the elegant and masterly pen of the TRANSLATOR OF ELOISA.







# LETTERS

## OF THE Marquis de ROSELLE.

### LETTER I.

*From the Countess de Saint-Sever to the Marquis  
de Roselle.*

*Paris, Nov. 18.*

UNITED by that tender friendship,  
U which you, my dear brother, as  
well as myself, have always thought  
essential to our happiness; your  
love is become so dear to me, that the least  
coldness or indifference cannot fail to give  
me the most mortifying uneasiness. I shall  
endeavour, therefore, not to expose myself to  
such an event. You know the sentiments of  
my heart, and I am too well acquainted with  
yours, to think I shall commit any act of

VOL. I. B indis-

## 2      L E T T E R   I.

indiscretion, in conjuring you to explain the motives of your late behaviour.

You have quitted the apartments I took for you, near my own; you are gone to lodge at a distant part of the town; I see you not so often as I used to do; I know not---but I fear---I am alarmed perhaps without a reason---I wish I may be so happy as to find my apprehensions groundless. Are your affections, my dear brother, unchanged? Satisfy my heart in this particular; that heart which you have at all times found so tender and affectionate. Perhaps the advice, I took the liberty to give you, was displeasing. But, reflect that I am your sister; nay, that I am more than a sister; you have neither father nor mother to direct you, and are just entered into life. The corps, to which you now belong, will necessarily bring you acquainted with a number of young people, who will influence you to partake of their pleasures, and of the dangerous consequences attending them. A young man, who, at the age of twenty years, finds himself, like you, his own master, precipitated into the vortex of the world, and its allurements, stands in need of advice: He need neither blush to receive nor to ask it.

it. Is it possible for you to have any real friends? Solid friendships are not contracted at your age. The attachments of youth are warm and violent; the most adviseable, however, are the more prudential. You, my dear brother, have but one friend; a tender, a sincere friend; one that hath had more experience than yourself, and merits your utmost regard: And can you neglect her? I have spoken to you on the subject of marriage; perhaps the proposal was displeasing? But I did not pretend to lay you under any restraint: Real tenderness and true friendship are never imperious; they propose, but exact nothing. I conceived I was speaking to you of an honourable and advantageous establishment: I must own to you, I should be glad to see you married. You owe that duty to your name and family; your heart is honest and susceptible: You cannot fail, therefore, of being happy in such a connection with an amiable and deserving woman. In saying this, my dear brother, I regard you as my son; will you not forgive my solicitude? I have hesitated long about writing; as I should have rather chosen to come to a personal explanation with you on the subject. But this, I perceived,

## 4 L E T T E R II.

ceived, you studiously avoided. Answer me then freely; open to me your whole heart, as a friend, a brother, a son; resting assured that you can never forfeit the regard of your affectionate sister.

---

## L E T T E R II.

*From the Marquis de Roselle to Madam de Saint-Sever.*

**WHENCE**, my dear sister, these strange suspicions? Is it possible you can doubt of being infinitely dear to me! Entertain not, I conjure you, so injurious an idea of me. I love, I esteem, I could almost say revere you, but that term might possibly displease. The tenderness of your friendship, and that interest which you take in all my concerns, deserve the utmost acknowledgment: But do not, my dear sister, be either afflicted or surprized that I see you not so often as I could wish. The connections which I have formed, by entering on my new situation, keep me from you in spite of myself. Your advice, however excellent with regard to morals in general,

## L E T T E R II. 5

general, is not alone sufficient to regulate my present conduct. An acquaintance with men, conversant with mankind, is now become necessary: Permit me, therefore, to cultivate the friendship of such as may guide me in the world, on which I have entered. The most rational, the most virtuous principles are no security against the shafts of ridicule. You forgive every thing but vice; the world forgives every thing but what is ridiculous. The company you keep is respectable, but too reserved; you live, if I may so express myself, in a family-way, with a few friends, who have nothing to recommend themselves but their virtues. I hold them, I confess, in great esteem; but their society is by no means sufficient for me. I am now in the world, and must necessarily see the world. I am obliged to you for the proposition of marriage; but I beg of you, to press me no farther on that head. The more respectable such a connection appears to me, the more fearful am I to engage in it. I am, indeed, so very young, that you would render both me and the woman I should marry unhappy. I must love, before I think of marriage. And we cannot love where or whom we will.



## 6 L E T T E R III.

Adieu, my dear sister, be assured of my warmest friendship ; nor entertain the least suspicion that its ardour can abate : Forgive my involuntary absence ; and, I again conjure you, speak to me no more of marriage.

---

## L E T T E R III.

*From Madam de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Nov. 18.*

**I** Could be silent no longer, my dear friend ; but have at length written to my brother. The inclosed is his answer. You will see it is polite, it is friendly, but not kind and tender. He gives me reasons, but they are not satisfactory. My people have discovered that he has formed some private connection, as I have already informed you. This privacy, my friend, proclaims him guilty. He pretends to be desirous of seeing the world, To this I consent : But it is with me he should live. Good God ! how much uneasiness doth he give me ! Oh ! that I could but recall those happy days ; when, at the age of childhood and innocence, he had no other confident than me ! You know, my dear, how much he deserves to be loved. Add to this, that

he



he is at present the only hope of our family. He had never the opportunity of profiting by the example of a father, who was so early taken off, at the head of his regiment, in Italy, that I myself can hardly remember him. My dying mother, you know, recommended this son, the dear object of her tenderest affections, to my care, "Be to him, said she, both father and mother---to this end I deliver him into the hands of you and your husband. Be both of you careful to direct him in his youth, He will be susceptible of violent passions; endeavour to preserve him from their attendant evils." These, the last words of a respectable and tenderly beloved mother, are written as a law in my heart, from which I will never swerve. I feel a double satisfaction, therefore, in reflecting, that I am obeying a mother in being watchful over the happiness of her son. At present, however, this reflection increases my apprehensions and disquietude. The only certain method to prevent the evils I dread, would be an agreeable and advantageous marriage; for which reason I never lose sight of this project. I have a mind to bring him acquainted with the Misses de St. Albin; the eldest would be a proper match for him:

## 8      L E T T E R   IV.

But then I so greatly fear those secret connections, of which I was speaking to you. Not that I apprehend he associates with men of abandoned characters; he hath a due sense of his own honour; but he may be imposed on: And you know the fallacious principles of most young men, who think it no dishonour to keep company with the vilest and most abandoned of women; conceiving that, if they are not seen with them in public, they are permitted to visit them familiarly in private; no inference, however, can be more absurd: But such absurdities are the natural effect of vice.

After all, ought I to search any farther into what my brother is desirous to keep from me? or ought I rather to trust him to himself, by giving into a dangerous or false security? I expect from your friendship and experience your advice on this head. Adieu.

---

## L E T T E R   IV.

*From Madam de Narton to Madam de Saint-Sever.*

*Paris, Nov. 20.*

**I** Enter, my dear Countess, into all your apprehensions, and partake of your solicitude,

# L E T T E R IV. 9

cltude. I must confess that air of mystery, which I discover in your brother's letter, gives me uneasiness. You are certainly in the right : When people secrete themselves, it is not without cause. Be fearful, however, but be not affrighted. You are not to flatter yourself, that your brother is to give into none of the follies of his age. It is hardly possible not to be seduced by such a multiplicity of bad examples. It is in vain also that your prudence is offended at every thing, which does not square with the purity of your own intentions. He may be wild, but his heart is honest, and will in time reform him. You have hitherto kept him always under your eye ; but he is now no longer a child, nor should be treated as such. Be watchful over his conduct ; but seem to trust him with it entirely himself. Your brother is now in the world ; which is to him as a new and strange country, where he will naturally be surprized at every thing. The world presents a very enchanting prospect to a person of his age. He will doubtless be hurried away with the torrent, and lead at first a life of dissipation ; he will form intrigues, indulge his passions, and fall into some errors ; I hope, however, from the goodness of his under-

## 10 L E T T E R IV.

understanding, his natural disposition, his education, and your prudence, that he will not proceed so far as to fall into vices ; or at least, if he should, that he will soon forsake them : the seeds of virtue have taken too deep root in his heart to permit him to do otherwise. When once young men have acquired a taste for the world and its pleasures, nothing but experience can undeceive them ; prudential remonstrances, unless very artfully disguised indeed, are ineffectual, without experience. Nay, there are innumerable truths which they are not even in a situation to comprehend. With regard to the Marquis, I will yet do my best. Here, indeed, I seldom see him ; but I shall know what he is about from Mr. de Ferval, who is frequently a party in his pleasures. Be not alarmed too soon, but compose yourself, my dear Countess. I hope shortly to be able to send you news of him. In the mean time, endeavour to draw him to your house, by some agreeable amusement. Innocent pleasures are the only means to create in him a disgust against the contrary. Let all your tenderness be displayed in your endeavours to divert and entertain him ; giving it, at the same time, an air of confidence in his discretion. Express  
always

# L E T T E R IV. 11

always respect and esteem for him : This is a very good way to prevent ingenuous minds from such actions as may render them unworthy of them. Never be importunate, or betray a troublesome curiosity, about his conduct ; affecting ever to be ignorant, and as indifferent about knowing, what he chuses to conceal. This piece of address is very necessary in the management of young people ; who cannot bear the thoughts of constraint and dependence, nor any thing which hath that appearance. Their ruling passions are for liberty and diversions. Obiging relations should seem therefore to indulge them, by contributing to their gratification ; a complacence which confirms their power, and can never be hurtful. How great, indeed, is our power over those by whom we are beloved ! Your brother loves you, and I am almost assured, from his character and disposition, that it is not wildness, or the mere desire of liberty, which makes him absent himself. It is upon this circumstance that my hopes, and indeed my suspicions too, are founded.

If it should be a love-affair---you will soon perceive it ; as, if he be deeply affected, he will endeavour for some time to hide his affection ; lovers delight in secrecy ; you will



## 12 L E T T E R IV.

will observe him absent, musing, and disturbed. If the object be worthy of him, he will not be long before he acquaints you with the situation of his heart. He will be desirous of imparting to you his sentiments; you will become his confidante, and be more ardently beloved by him than ever.

If, on the other hand, he should have unhappily attached himself to a despicable object, he will make use of every opportunity to withdraw himself, and to excuse his absence. He will be so far from seeking, that he will, on all occasions, shun your company. In such a case, my dear, the greatest care should be taken, to conceal those cautionary measures which would be necessary to his safety. But this supposition is perhaps groundless; do not, therefore, too readily give into it. I am so nearly interested in what affects you, that my imagination suggests the worst that may happen.

I think you would do well to spare your advice, at least till the Marquis may ask it. The least evil it can be productive of, when given unasked, is that of being troublesome to the receiver; and then it is always useless. Your advice, indeed, may become dangerous; as it may occasion the Marquis



to keep himself at a still greater distance from you ; he will be apt to regard your counsels as lessons ; and lessons are ever displeasing. Add to this, that nothing is more to be dreaded, then the instilling a habit of hearing good advice without paying it attention ; or with an actual intention of not following it ; or, what is still worse, with a design to elude its force, or to pervert it to the confirmation of one's interest or inclinations. This, my dear, is always the case with young people agitated by warm passions, whose indiscreet relations are pestering them with advice, at times when they are not capable of listening to it, and still much less to pursue it : We should not be prodigal of the truth, but reserve it for critical and decisive occasions, when it should be represented in all its force ; by which means, it is sometimes productive of the greatest effects.

I would also by no means advise you to speak to your brother of marriage ; you hear what he says to you on that subject. His reluctance does not at all surprize me ; it is the consequence of his taste for independency. Almost all young people think as he does ; all their virtuous relations ought to think as you do. Your design is rational ;  
but

## 14      L E T T E R   I V .

but let it not be too apparent. If your brother is of a different way of thinking, you will make him still more so, and still less fond of your company. In order to engage him to marry, love must be our director. We then need only leave him to the impulses of his own heart. Endeavour to bring him acquainted with amiable young women ; I approve highly of that project.

But I must not fail again to recommend to you, my dear, by no means to betray any curiosity about his conduct. Never reduce him to the temptation of deceiving you : You will thus render falshood habitual. At first a seeming necessity may force him to it, tho' it may hurt him ; but afterwards dissimulation will become familiar ; he will make a jest of it, and all is lost. Be particularly careful to preserve the ingenuousness and candour of his disposition. I would have him even perceive, from your reserve, the fear you are under of deceiving him into an occasion of speaking an untruth. This cannot fail of creating in him a detestation against a vice, into which an indiscreet severity hath plunged so many young people.

Constraint, I say again, gives rise to dissimulation, and this to that degree of falshood,  
which

## L E T T E R V. 15

which necessarily brings with it a meanness of spirit, that excludes all hope.

Such, my dear Countess, are the reflections which your present circumstances have occasioned. Weigh them. I only point out to you that path I should pursue, were I in your situation. Depend on my assiduity. My young friend may possibly serve us. Adieu, my dear; depend on it, your interests are mine.

---

## L E T T E R V.

*From Madam de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Nov. 24.*

**T**HE justness of your reflections, my kind friend, has corrected mine. I perceived the necessity of procuring amusements for my brother; but you have displayed the danger of my giving him counsel. I acquiesce, and, however difficult, will, for the future, with-hold my advice. I have indeed already begun. He came to see me to-day; when I perceived him musing, pensive, and under some constraint. On my part, I expressed all that pleasure I felt in seeing him; by which he accordingly seemed affected,

16 L E T T E R V.

fected; I then invited him to sup with me  
 the day after to-morrow; which he promi-  
 sed with a tolerable good grace. After which  
 promise, I sent and made sure of Madam de  
 St. Albin and her two daughters. I have  
 long projected this interview; you know  
 those young ladies; they have beauty, and  
 are just come out of a convent, where they  
 have received the best education; their mo-  
 desty is equal to their accomplishments; their  
 mother hath spared nothing to render them  
 amiable; they are very rich, and their family  
 is of distinction; in short, I conceive the par-  
 ties excellent for a match. I shall be ex-  
 tremely rejoiced, my dear, if my brother could  
 make choice of the elder. I intend to give  
 out supper the air of an entertainment: For  
 which reason, I have invited several agreeable  
 friends and some young persons of wit. I  
 design also to prevail on the two misses de  
 St. Albin to sing. After supper I purpose  
 farther to give a little ball; in a word, I  
 shall neglect nothing that may contribute to  
 our diversions. I will give you an account of  
 the effects of my preparations and design.  
 My husband, indeed, turns the whole into  
 raillery. He does not believe either of the  
 young ladies will please my brother, because

L E T T E R VI. 17

they have a stiff and reserved air. For my part, however, I think their deportment the same as that of other young people well educated.

Adieu, my dear friend. If you need any assurance of my friendship, you may judge of it by the confidence I place in you.

L E T T E R VI.

*From Madam de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Nov. 27.*

**M**Y brother hath by no means seconded my hopes; his politeness could not conceal his uneasiness. Both supper and ball were passed formally through with a gloomy indifference; though we did not break up till four in the morning. I exerted myself as much as possible to diffuse an air of cheerfulness and festivity; but to no purpose; I could not succeed. Alas! I fear your suspicions are but too well founded. People are not disgusted and tired with innocent and decent recreations, who are not unhappy enough to be acquainted with others. I was myself very much chagrined, but

VOL. I. C dissembled



## 18 L E T T E R VII.

dissembled so well that he did not perceive it. My design is to continue to act in the same manner; without being discouraged, I will endeavour to instruct and serve him without laying him under any restraint. This, my dear friend, is all I can say to you till I recover of the fatigue of this ball. Adieu, and believe I love you sincerely.

---

## L E T T E R VII.

*From Madam de Narton to Madam de Saint-Sever.*

*Paris, Nov. 28.*

**Y**OU ought not, my dear Countess, to be either discouraged or surprized. I foresaw, with Mr. de Saint-Sever, what would be the effect of your supper scheme. It is true, the Misses de St. Albin are pretty, and have received what is called the best education. But, my dear, they are not at all proper for your brother. They do not suit my taste, nor reconcile me to the method usually taken to form our young ladies. If I were to educate a daughter, I would take a very different one. It is not by means of those dry and formal precepts, those false and extravagant notions inculcated in  
convents,



convents, that a young woman is insensibly prepared to make a proper figure in life, and to discharge the duties of a wife and mother. But, be this as it may, I cannot believe the Marquis could love, much less for a constancy, a woman with so much formality and so little nature.

Mr. de Ferval hath here interrupted me.

O! my dear friend, it is as I suggested; we have need of courage and vigilance, with these we may deliver your brother from all dangers. An evil is not great when it is known: We may then apply a proper remedy. The Marquis is hurried away by the custom of the multitude; it is our business to stop him. The world endeavour to make a young man, of twenty, blush at being prudent; they persuade him it is ridiculous to have no intrigues, and thus oblige him, with or without inclination, to engage in them.

It is the fashion to keep opera women. They are easy of access and seductive; so that what might only prove an air of fashion, a piece of gallantry, in persons accustomed to intrigues, may be productive of a real passion in a raw and unexperienced youth. It is true these creatures are, for the most

## 20 L E T T E R VII.

part, too despicable, for us to fear their being long able to deceive ingenuous minds. Love either elevates or debases the soul, according to the object which inspires it. Your brother will soon be ashamed of his passion, will strive against it, and we will assist him entirely to overcome it. Be not terrified, my dear Countess, we have already a method to open his eyes with regard to his favourite Leonora. For such is the name of his mistress, a singer at the opera, excessively pretty, and extremely artful.

The behaviour of this woman sufficiently indicates the dangerous nature of her designs. She certainly practises the arts of coyness and severity, in order to secure the Marquis's affections. All her other lovers are dismissed, except one M. de la Roche, a rich old financier, who doats on her preposterously, and has his reasons for keeping his connections with her a secret. There is great cause to believe, she takes advantage of this secrecy, which he is obliged to keep, to receive him only at such hours as best suit her other purposes. Your brother, however, has no suspicion of this intrigue; but thinks himself her only lover.

It

## L E T T E R VIII. 21

It is doubtless this Leonora, that causes him to absent himself from your house: depend on it, it is she. Dissemble with him; affect to be entirely ignorant of his proceedings. Ferval, of whose zeal and assiduity I am assured, will neglect nothing to come at all the particulars of his conduct, and the progress of his amour. Be not alarmed, my dear Countess, let us alone, redouble your civilities, conceal your apprehensions, and depend on our care.

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## L E T T E R VIII.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

*Paris, Nov. 28.*

**T**HROW me not into desperation, adorable creature; you have never been so passionately admired, you have confessed it to me. By what fatality is it that the tenderest of lovers should incur only your cruelty? What crime is it I have committed? Crime! Can I be criminal! Can so sincere a lover commit a crime against the object of his passion? Thou hast prohibited me even the pleasure of seeing you. Two days, two whole days are passed without the hope of— And canst thou hate me? Good God!—

22      L E T T E R IX:

Yes, Leonora, you may justly be accused of cruelty ; for what can possibly be your motives for such conduct ? Deign at least to inform me of the cause. If--- but I will not entertain so horrible an idea---My heart grows cold, I shudder at the thought. Explain thyself--- No, rather keep from me--- Yes, I would know the worst. If I am doomed to suffer thy hate---But you will be offended at this.---Forgive, oh ! forgive, my dear Leonora, these involuntary transports. You know too well that I had rather die than displease you. Do not persist in driving me to despair ; deign to write to me, to answer me, to mix some consolation with your severity ; at least from pity if not from love. Adieu ; the agitations of fear, love, and tenderness perplex and confound all my ideas. Heavens ! What a state of mind ! Permit me, dear Leonora, to see you to day. Refuse me not this favour. ---You must not---I fly to your presence.

---

L E T T E R IX.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Nov. 28.*

**Y**OUR passion, my dear Marquis, affects me ; but how mortifying are your suspicions !

L E T T E R IX. 23

pitions ! Can you not forgive that I should, in the least, merit your esteem ? Your virtues have inspired me with so much for you, they have cast such a ray of light over my soul, that, instead of complaining, you ought to approve its effect. Yes, my dear Marquis, it is to you I owe a desire, a taste, for virtue. Nature, indeed, had planted the seeds in my heart ; but you have caused them to germinate. Neither the rigour of my fortune, nor the cruelty of my parents, in bringing me up to so dangerous and seductive a profession ; not all the temptations it hath, unhappily subjected me to, could eradicate its precious germ from my heart. But, dissipation, the force of example, and what, alas ! is still worse, indigence, horrible indigence, have long held that fatal bandage, which you have caused to fall from mine eyes. You have little reason to complain of my heart. It is that which pleads for you, and makes me forget the injustice of your suspicions. I hope I may put so much confidence in your complacency for me, as to be assured you will not come to-day. I wish I may be able to see you any other without danger. Adieu, my dear Marquis, it is to be hoped you will know Leonora better.



## L E T T E R X.

*From the Marquis to Mr. de Valville.**Paris, Nov. 30.*

YESTERDAY, my dear Valville, I saw Leonora, who has restored my heart to its usual serenity ; I am assured of her affection. Even her repulses are so kind and tender, that I should be pleased with them, if I were less in love. Her mind is, indeed, replete with delicacy. It is her love it is her virtue, my friend, that renders me unhappy : And at that price I can consent to be so.---No, I hope still to overcome her reluctance ; I will triumph over it by force of my own tenderness ; such a triumph will but add to my happiness. The suspicions I imparted to you the other day were altogether groundless. How sincerely do I reproach myself for them ; since she has effaced them without even endeavouring at her own justification. Cast off, my dear friend, any prejudices which my angry jealousy may have given you against her. Indeed, you know but little of Leonora, and are apt to confound her with her associates.---No, Valville, she is an object worthy of my heart ; she has engrossed



## L E T T E R X. 25

engrossed it; and I am no longer engaged in an intrigue, but have contracted a real passion. A real passion!---And for Leonora!---It is even so, I will not retract what I have said.---I feel---But thou art the only person in the world, to whom I can open my heart on this occasion. Forgive those effusions, of which it really stands in need. I am much afraid my sister will discover my passion. She is a very deserving woman, to whom I am obliged as to a mother. She is very dear to me; but her prejudices are as great as her virtues. I know that she would think me totally ruined, if she knew of this attachment of mine to the most amiable of women. To an opera-girl! That, that would be enough to involve her in the greatest affliction. I must be very cautious, therefore, of my behaviour, on her account; and that even before my own servants.

She has a mind I should marry. Judge whether I can give into her proposal. I supped with her two days ago, in consequence of an invitation she gave me three days before: When it had been easy for me to see through her designs, had her husband, M. de St. Sever, thought proper to  
leave

leave it to my own penetration. I had hardly entered the house, when he took me aside, and, with an air of secrecy, extolled the beauty, accomplishments, and particularly the fortune of Miss de St. Albin : from which I immediately saw into the scheme, and was confirmed in my opinion, by being very particularly presented to Madam de St. Albin and her two daughters. The company, which was pretty numerous, were all met when I arrived, and consisted, first, of ladies, to whom I should very willingly give the appellation of agreeable, if they did not affect that of pretty ; secondly, of sensible men, who laboured to be entertaining ; thirdly, of frigid scholars, who set up for wits ; and lastly, of boys and girls, timid, awkward, and bashful. You may judge from the single figures what must be the effect of the groupe. The conversation soon began to flag ; on which cards were introduced : I played a game or two, and won, but was tired to death, notwithstanding Miss St. Albin was of the party. It must be confessed that both she and her sister are pretty ; but so reserved and formal ! It was with difficulty I could hear a word they said ; speaking so extremely low and with their eyes always fixed on their

mama.

mama. It seems, they were set upon displaying their talents, the eldest singing while the youngest played on the harpsichord. Thus we were entertained with a cantata, which by their manner one would have taken for the *Stabat*\* of Pergolese.

These two beauties are just come out of a convent. I should have almost taken them for two mutes, had I not remarked that, while their mama was at cards, and did not see them, they got into a corner to discourse quite low, with another young person of the same age. I listened a little to their conversation, but found it so very insipid, and their tongues so extremely voluble, that I soon left them to themselves. At table, I had the particular honour of being placed by the *Milles de St. Albin*, from whom it was hardly possible for me to get a single word. If I asked them any question, it was always answered with a reserved and formal *yes, Sir,* or, *no, Sir*; the good lady their mother ever taking upon herself to answer for them, if it went beyond a monosyllable.

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\* The *Stabat Mater*, a remarkable grave piece of church musick: Thus an Englishman might have said, on a like occasion, the hundredth *Psalms* or *The children in the wood*.

After

## 28 L E T T E R X.

After supper, my sister, being absolutely determined to make the evening agreeable to me, proposed the opening a ball; to which I found a good deal of company had been invited. Indeed, for so little an affair, it was very elegant and brilliant. We danced very decently, talking, however, only to the mothers: For as to the daughters, they resembled statues moving about on springs. In a word, I do not believe that gloominess and disgust ever wore the mask of gaiety with so ill a grace. It was necessary, notwithstanding, to seem pleased, and to keep up this grave farce till four in the morning. For my part, I was most intolerably tired and chagrined; which I am sorry my sister perceived; tho' knowing myself the hero of the entertainment, I did all I could to carry it off with a good grace. Judge, my dear friend, from this project of my sister, what I should have to encounter, if she knew the real state of my heart. You see how much reason there is for my caution. Will you, therefore, take upon you the commission of buying a chariot, which I have a mind to present to Leonora? You will oblige me in it essentially, as I cannot, for the above reasons,

L E T T E R XI. 29

sons, make the purchase myself. Adieu, dear Valville. Your's sincerely.

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L E T T E R XI.

*From Valville to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 1.*

I Thought, Marquis, you had a great share of understanding ! Upon my honour I thought so ! You have taken lessons of a pretty able master, and have profited by them most egregiously ! Come, come, I find you must not be trusted out of your leading-strings. The first emotions of these young hearts are so violent ; they are so very pressing, that the understanding is not able to keep them within any bounds, when excited by the smallest allurements of a pretty female. Understanding ! do I say ?---No, no. To have understanding we must have a knowledge of the world. No people of your age possess understanding. Believe me, you are only hurried away by a blind and foolish inclination. I shall know exactly the true state of your heart to-morrow. You grown children are very subject to mistake your first  
palpi-



## 30 L E T T E R XI.

palpitations for a passion. I foresee it will be no easy matter to remove the effects of that wrong education you have received. You have been trained up for a man of noble sentiments and refined conduct; ridiculous! We never get any thing by being superior to those among whom we reside and converse. And, indeed, the truest philosophy is, to cultivate that species of merit which is most generally admired. I introduced you to Leonora, in order to give you the fashionable *ton*, and establish your reputation as a man of gallantry and taste; and you truly fall in love with her. How puerile and absurd! The whole affair now-a-days is to render one's self agreeable: There is no necessity for one's falling in love. This will never render one agreeable, unless, indeed, merely to the object of one's passion. Nothing more is requisite than gallantry, or the love of the sex in general. And this is natural; for are not all women so much like one another, that we may easily make an exchange between them. The taste for exclusive attachments is quite out of vogue. Instead of overcharging the heart with one grand passion, we divide its affection into a thousand little, light, transitory likings, tastes, and

and attachments, (the small money of love,) as people change gold into silver, preserving still the value of the whole. A convenient house, splendid equipages, agreeable entertainments, kind mistresses, gallant adventures; all these little pleasures amount to a considerable sum of happiness; enough, in conscience, I should think, for any reasonable man.

As to the particular article of mistresses; the fashionable way is to take some celebrated *Lais* into keeping; but not to put one's self in her livery; to love her just so much as is necessary to make her company agreeable, and no more than will permit one to cast her off, whenever one thinks it convenient.

You are very good, Marquis, to entertain an opinion of the virtue of women. But you would be a very great fool to place any confidence in that of an opera-girl. Leonora would pass on you for a modest woman; she knows her business. The artful jade! she knows the way to entrap these innocents, who wish to esteem what they admire; let her alone for that; she will diffuse an odour of sanctity throughout her whole family; and you, an unsuspecting dupe, will run your nose into the snare. She would lead you a fine dance, if some body better acquainted with

## 32 L E T T E R XI.

with female arts should not come to your relief. Thou standest in need of a director; and, if I knew one more capable than myself, I have so much regard for you, that I would recommend you to him: But I imagine that my abilities may be sufficient. Follow the plan which I shall lay down for your conduct, and Leonora will, in a few days, be yours; Valville will answer for it. Begin immediately by throwing off that simple air of passion which by no means becomes you. Talk of love with an air of indifference and gaiety. Give your nymph some hints of your generous inclinations; of your inclinations only---you understand me.---It is time enough to think in reality of the equipage you talk of. What *dispositions* have you made together on that head? If you are desirous of Leonora's speedy compliance, appear to have taken up with some other mistress; excite her jealousy, give a check to her vanity, and alarm her avarice, (for she is covetous,) in resuming the chearful air of a man restored to his liberty; and, if you should visit her again, let it not be for some time, and then with indifference.

If you would immediately see through the design of her pretended virtue, assume the  
 air

air of a man who knows the world; of those to whom your sister gives the appellation of Libertines. Affect to disregard both women and their favours, and turn sentiment into ridicule; be familiar with her, bold, free, forward, and so forth. Follow these directions, and the syren will soon fall into your snare: but if you do otherwise, depend on it you will be so hampered in her's, as not to escape with impunity. Remember I tell you, you will become the jest of the public, and by this egregious piece of folly will lose a thousand favourable opportunities. Therefore well consider it.

Make a resolution also, in good earnest to throw off the preceptorship of your sister. What! to be eternally under the ferula! And pray, my good friend, how do you think she is to form you for the world? She who is acquainted only with the virtues of our grandmothers: She would make of you a good patriot, a good Christian. And what then? You might have the merit of the most celebrated of the old Romans; and what would it avail? Would you be the more caressed, more rewarded, the better entertained, or the more happy. New times, new manners, my friend, is the best of all our old proverbs.

The virtue of our times is honour; not, indeed, that kind of honour, which was coveted by those blustering knights that ransacked the world, like blockheads, in search of dangerous adventures; but that of a man of gallantry, who does not debase himself by any act of meanness or cowardice. The antiquated virtue of our forefathers would appear, in all good company, like a savage transplanted into a civilized country, where he would affrighten every body he met, and every body he met would be affrighted at him.

Resign it all to your sister, if she likes it, and her ridiculous associates; who in their solitude are at least several ages behind us. I can enter very well into her character, by the manner of the ball and entertainment you describe. I'll hold a wager she thought to divert you wonderfully: I'll answer for it, these people conceive they divert themselves. As to M. de St. Sever, he is one of those sort of men who is pleased with any thing, because they have not taste enough to be displeased. An honest, downright, Marplot, always busy for want of something to do, or through a friendly zeal that is always in the wrong; in short, he is a character truly



# L E T T E R XI. 35

truly burlesque. I have seen Madam de St. Albin's daughters; mighty pretty puppets, truly! It is pity they are dumb. Not but that either might do well enough for a wife; and in that I should for once be of your sister's opinion, if you thought yourself old enough to marry. The woman whom it is the least necessary for us to think agreeable, is one's own wife. By marrying, we espouse the fortune of a woman, and set her person at liberty. This is what is generally esteemed a reputable way of observing that sacrament. Miss de St. Albin is a young lady of condition, rich, and may be made a wife of without any great inconvenience; but it should not be quite so soon. You have as yet got but one mistress; how can you have such a narrow notion of things as to take a wife. As to Leonora ---- But stay; what is it o' clock? Half an hour past seven. Adieu, my dear friend; I had an appointment at six; I proposed to be there at seven, and it will presently be eight. Yours till to-morrow.

## L E T T E R XII.

*From Madam de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Nov. 28.*

**A**LAS! my dear friend, how can I forbear being alarmed. To see my brother exposed to the most terrible dangers, and dare not to speak to him! How difficult is it to be silent. Into what a labyrinth can he have strayed? If friendly and virtuous counsel is become dangerous, where is our resource? My husband, who is not so much alarmed as I am, says he will undertake to cure my brother. He is acquainted with that Mr. Roche you speak of; and conceives he may be of service to us in undeceiving the Marquis. Where doth M. Ferval obtain the information he gives you? Doubtless you know the young gentleman well, and that we run no risque in placing confidence in him. Assure him of my utmost acknowledgment; reanimate his zeal, and engage him to continue his assiduity. Adieu, my dear friend, I depend entirely on you.

L E T-

## L E T T E R XIII.

*From Madam de Narton to Madam de Saint-Sever.*

*Paris, Nov. 30.*

I AM sensible, my dear friend, how great is your disquietude, and you know how much I must partake of it. You will not do well, however, to be too susceptible of danger: the evil is not without remedy. The zeal of our friend Ferval needs nothing to reanimate it: he is a youth of great spirits and vivacity. His mother is my friend, and I have known him from his cradle. He appears greatly flattered by our confidence; and seems delighted at being useful to us, and at seeing that I hold his understanding and probity in so much esteem, as to employ him in an affair of so delicate a nature. I can answer for him, that it engages his whole time and attention. Educated under the most tender and affectionate of mothers, his manners are pure, his sentiments refined, and his heart warm as it is honest. His extreme vivacity, which might be mistaken for giddiness, does not prevent his having infinite address, in coming at the minutest circumstance of a thousand private adventures. He

## 38 L E T T E R XIII.

is in the secret of most intrigues about town, has a talent for discoveries, and is besides connected with your brother ; so that he will on no account be suspected. It is by various little arts and means he hath discovered a sure method of coming at the knowledge of every circumstance it is important for us to know.

To this end, he hath, by some means or other, engaged Leonora's chamber-maid in his interest ; who gave him, no longer ago than yesterday, some fresh information. The Marquis, she says, has told Leonora of your being desirous he should marry : since which piece of confidence placed in her, she has redoubled her reserve towards him ; even so much as with difficulty to permit him to see her. Such is her management at present. It was one Mr. Valville, it seems, a friend of your brother, that some time ago brought him acquainted with Leonora. It appears, that he began with the Marquis, by first urging him to keep a mistress ; assuring him it was by no means proper for such a man as he to have no intrigue on his hands. On this notion, of the propriety of keeping a mistress, the Marquis began to look out for one, and Valville so ordered it, that his choice fell on Leonora, of whom he himself had been an admirer

# L E T T E R   X I I I .   39

admirer for above three years : a circumstance, however, which he thought proper to keep a secret from your brother.

It is this girl with which the Marquis hath fallen desperately in love ; making her magnificent presents ; which she receives with apparent reluctance and most artful address. In a word, my dear, he is quite intoxicated, absolutely delirious with his passion. I advise you of this, not to increase your apprehensions, but to shew you how necessary it will be to make use of artful and proper management to cure him of so absurd a passion. If you will be ruled by me, you will avoid speaking to him of any thing that relates to the affair. Be well upon your guard ; your friendship may otherwise betray you into it. It is very essential that he should not suspect your knowing any thing of his intrigue ; as it would serve at once to mortify and irritate him, both which are, in my opinion, equally dangerous. I should be very glad also that M. de St. Sever should leave the conduct of this affair entirely to us. Endeavour, my dear Countess, to prevent his speaking or acting in it, if possible. I know the warmth of his affection for you, and fear it may induce him to engage in this business with



## 40 L E T T E R XIII.

more zeal than prudence. On such delicate occasions, the least step is of importance.

I know not whether you are acquainted with Valville ; he is in high life, and hath adopted its modes and principles : he imagines himself irreproachable as a man of honour, and hath but very false notions of honour itself. He piques himself on a species of false virtue, which, with him, supplies the place of that real virtue he despises. He treats every thing as the effect of prejudice, and is himself governed by nothing but prejudices. He imagines himself to be a man of probity, and is only a man of figure : he entertains but a bad opinion of women ; he appears, however, to respect them ; esteems none, but amuses himself with all that come in his way. Love he considers as trifling ; but out of decorum makes a point of friendship. Drinking he hates, but is fond of pleasure, which he seldom attains. His taste is delicate, his mind feeble, and his heart cold and indifferent. A slave to the extravagance of custom, he treats the most frivolous things with great gravity, but has no idea of sentiment or real tenderness.

There, my dear Countess, is a sketch of the picture of your brother's friend. But let  
not

not his portrait frighten you ; this man may be of service to us ; his heart is not formed to treat love as a passion. He will oppose that of the Marquis only by ridicule ; but he will oppose it very strongly. The arguments of vice are more artful than those of virtue, and his false precepts will make a deeper impression than your principles of chastity and virtue. As Valville sets up for the friend, the Mentor of the Marquis, and hath introduced him into the world, he will be justly afraid that the ridicule of this attachment would rebound on himself, if it were known ; doubt not, therefore, his making use of all that superiority, which ten years age and experience have given him, to recover your brother from those dangerous connections in which he himself engaged him. Leonora is afraid of him, and would gladly separate him from the Marquis ; but she is fearful as yet of giving such an intimation, and your brother doth not perceive any thing of the matter. I say again, it is extremely fortunate, under the present circumstances, that your brother puts so much confidence in his friend Valville.

Such, my dear Countess, is a particular and exact account of the situation of affairs ;  
be

42      L E T T E R    X I V .

be assured that my information will be very authentic, and that I shall not keep you ignorant of any thing. Adieu : keep up your spirits, and depend on the most sincere and affectionate of your friends.

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L E T T E R    X I V .

*From the Marquis de Roselle to Valville.*

*Paris, Dec. 2.*

AH! my dear Valville, you know but little of love. Excuse me when I tell you, that your letter really shocked me. Pray what is your idea of sentiment, if it is to be thus subjected to mere circumstance, How different is my heart from yours ! I burn, I die for Leonora, and yet take a delight in my sufferings. I respect, I admire that virtue, which reduces me to this state of desperation. Shall I affect not to love her, because you think her an object unworthy of my esteem. Is it you, Valville, who gives me such counsel ? How is it possible for me to pursue it ? No : It is my love, my assiduity alone that can melt her heart. What a triumph ! If you but overlook, my dear friend,

## L E T T E R XIV. 43

friend, the former conduct of this amiable girl, you will find, that her virtue, at present, is more impregnable, than that of a woman, who never experienced the like seductions. She permitted me yesterday to pay her a visit: Heavens! What an admirable mixture of love, modesty, prudence, and beauty! One must have an heart of adamant not to be affected: I owe her the greatest obligations; her least favours are sacrifices; the sweetness and openness of her manner serve alone to soften the severity of her reserve: in a word, she is an adorable creature. Oh! my friend, in what a distressful situation is my poor heart. She has reduced me so low, as even to fear offending by asking any thing: My respect is equal to the ardour of my desires. I know not what will be the consequence of all this; but this I know, that to deprive me of hope, would be to deprive me of life. You have refused to do me the service I desired of you; your friendship being your excuse prevents my complaining; I shall, therefore, take care of that business myself. But I beg of you to spare Leonora in your letters; you owe this, at least, to our friendship; and, in particular, forbear to speak to me of any other,

44      L E T T E R   XV.

other mistress. Adieu, my dear Valville, and believe that my heart is open to none but you.

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L E T T E R   XV.

*From M. de Valville to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 2.*

**I** Both love and pity you, my dear Marquis; but I will never encourage your extravagant passion. For heaven's sake, make nobody your confident but me; you will never be able to efface the ridicule such an amour would bring upon you. You insist on my not speaking against the virtue of your mistress; be it so; I will hold it in due reverence; I will even forget her past conduct, to oblige you. But, my good friend, were she even the modestest woman in the world, do you think I should approve the nature of your attachment? Love is in you absolute madness. Do you know that love should be only an affair of amusement, a preservative against the spleen? One ought in his amours, as in all other affairs, to lay down a settled plan, and pursue it invariably, at least if circumstances do not change.

One



One takes such a girl as Leonora into keeping, and maintains her handsomely, so long as she proves agreeable and amuses one ; quitting her the moment one is tired of her company, or she grows impertinent. There is nothing more in the matter. A little more respect, indeed, is to be paid to women of a certain rank ; but it is seldom that persons under my age are admitted there. A connection with these ladies requires more art and assiduity. To insinuate one's self into the good opinion of a husband, to make sure of his servants, and to preserve appearances, form a difficult task, which a knowledge of the world only can capacitate a man to perform. It was for this reason, I would not have you begin, upon such a scheme. Leonora was a proper object for you at first setting out ; but your brain is actually turned. Recollect yourself, my dear Marquis, pray ; you are absolutely in a burning fever, which must be abated. With so great an inclination to merit deference, you ought to be particularly fearful of incurring ridicule. Only think of that which this adventure would bring upon you, were it publickly known. For my part, I will keep the secret ;

## 46 L E T T E R XVI.

cret; but don't go to expose yourself. Farewell, my dear Marquis, forgive my freedom as I forgive your weakness.

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## L E T T E R XVI.

*From Madam de Narton to the Countess.*

*Paris, Dec. 20.*

**I** Am extremely sorry, my dear friend, to be obliged to set out for Varennes, one of my estates in Lorrain, and to leave you in the midst of so much uneasiness. An unforeseen and unavoidable accident requires my immediate departure; nor do I very well know when it will be possible for me to return. The chagrin your brother's affairs must necessarily give you increases my regret to leave you. Had I staid, I should have done every thing in my power to serve both him and you; my zeal for your service, however, will not be lessened by my absence; and, perhaps, may be more efficacious. It was not in my power to act in the affair myself; and Mr. Ferval, to whom I should have been obliged, will do us the same good offices as if I was present. I shall reside in the neighbourhood of his mother, who will join her influence

## L E T T E R XVII. 47

influence to engage her son to redouble his attention to the conduct of your brother. He has promised to write to me constantly; and I shall send you his letters, when they can be of any utility. Adieu, my dear Countess, I suffer extremely at the occasion of my departure.

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## L E T T E R XVII.

*From the Countess to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Dec. 25.*

**H**OW unseasonable, my dear friend, is the cause of your absence! So necessary is your company, tho' it were only to give me some consolation. I have heard no more of my brother since your departure; for these four days past I know not even what is become of him. My husband has been with M. de la Roche. I could not prevent his indulging his own inclination. Not that I see any ill consequences that can arise from his visit. He will himself give you an account of the particulars of it. I must confess that my mind is not sufficiently at liberty to enter into a recital of that nature. I am indeed so much astonished at all these

## 48 L E T T E R XVIII.

these circumstances, that I conceit myself as it were in another world. Forget me not, my dear friend, but transmit me some advice of my brother, as well as of yourself, as soon as possible.

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## L E T T E R XVIII.

*From the Count de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Dec. 25.*

**I** Reserved to myself, Madam, the pleasure of communicating to you the particulars of my visit to M. de la Roche. My wife takes the matter seriously enough for us both. Not that I think her fears altogether groundless. The arts of a pretty woman are too dangerous not to be feared : But I hope, that our Marquis hath not entirely lost his senses ; and that nothing more is requisite, than to take off the bandage from his eyes to make him see clearly.

To this end, I have been to wait on M. de la Roche, who is an old acquaintance ; one that I knew on his entrance into life. The recollection of his circumstances at that time might not have been extremely agreeable  
now ;

# L E T T E R XVIII. 49

now; I avoided, therefore, taking notice of any thing that might be offensive; but assumed the familiar air of an old friend; which appeared to give him some pleasure, as it was in the presence of a young Duke, who doubtless came to borrow money of him. He seemed delighted, therefore, at the kind of relief which this interruption gave him. When his Grace was gone, I formed a pretext of business to assign as a motive for my visit. After this, I commended his house, his furniture, gardens, &c. all which he was officious to shew me. By these means, I got so much into his favour, that he asked me what I had been doing for these twenty years past, that I had never seen him. On this I informed him of my marriage, and by degrees brought upon the carpet the situation of my brother-in-law; dwelling particularly on his connections with a singer of the opera. Why, said he, it must be owned they are very pretty women; but they are costly; add to that---Nay, said I, interrupting him, not that I think she costs *him* much. For I am assured she is at the same time kept by a gentleman extremely rich and of very good understanding, who loves

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her



## 50 L E T T E R XVIII.

her to distraction, notwithstanding she thus imposes on him.---Ho ! ho ! ho ! the block-head ! said he, laughing ; how is it possible he can be such a dupe ? And you are assured he is a man of sense !---Indeed, I am told he has an infinite deal ; and that it is which so much astonishes me. But who is this girl, said he, with some vivacity.---I think her name is Leonora : Yes it is ; it's Leonora.---At this my old acquaintance coloured up to the eyes, and after being a minute or two silent, replied coldly, he did not know her. I insisted much on the misfortune of the gallant, who was thus deceived ; concluding he must be some very worthy person ; and describing the happiness of the Marquis in terms so mortifying to him, that at length I effected my design. For, either out of weakness or vexation, he confessed to me the whole of the affair. I, said he, am that unfortunate wretch ; but I well know how to do myself justice. At my age, it is necessary one should be generous ; for which reason I have been so. I allowed her no less than 1500 livres a month ; I presented her with all the furniture of her house, besides 40,000 livres worth of jewels. I required of her only

# L E T T E R XVIII. 51

only to be faithful to me, and keep my amour a secret. My wife is old and very devout; I have children thirty years of age, and two sons-in-law of distinction, who build much on my care to improve my fortune. I have besides to do with a man, whose severity of manners would by no means approve such amusements. All this obliges me to be discreet, and I flattered myself the world was ignorant of my weakness. The impudent strumpet! I see she hath made use of my very precaution to deceive me. I have not been able to obtain a sight of her above twice for this month past: The reason she gave for requiring my absence was, that I was watched by some of my family. You are a man of gallantry, Sir, continued he; you know the world; I therefore do not repent trusting you with my secret. But what steps can I take in this affair? I am so extremely enraged. I wash my hands, for the future, of all intrigues with such infamous wretches: But I will be revenged. I will have the satisfaction of seeing that abominable impostor plunged again into that poverty, from which my weakness hath raised her. I have had her but a twelvemonth; and only think

## 52 L E T T E R XIX.

what an immense sum she has cost me. By heavens, I will never forgive her. A torrent of abusive appellations succeeded this last reflection; you may be sure I encouraged him to avenge himself; pitying, embracing him, and promising to keep his secret inviolably: after which we parted the best friends in the world; his disposition being just such as I could wish to have it. Thus have I stirred up one vice to punish another; from which I think nothing but good consequences can possibly happen. You see, Madam, this affair wears a promising aspect. Your most sincere and respectable servant. Adieu.

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## L E T T E R XIX.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 14.*

**Y**OU need not, my dear Marquis, be generous, in order to render yourself amiable. Take back, I conjure you, take back your presents; they are too magnificent. You will not suspect me of ingratitude; but do not appear, by such gifts, to suspect me of an avarice too contemptible to find a place

## L E T T E R XX. 53

place in my heart. Alas ! you judge of my sentiments by those of others of my profession. Cruel prejudice ! from which virtue only can defend me ! But ought not your esteem also to be my advocate ? I have returned you the casket you left yesterday on my toilette ; and beg of you to receive it again, and be assured my acknowledgments are equal to your generosity.

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## L E T T E R XX.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

*Paris, Dec. 14.*

**N**AY, this is too much—refuse even to accept my presents ! This is to add to my unhappiness a degree of contempt that is insupportable. I will not receive it again.— You hate me, Leonora, I see ; I feel you hate me. In the name of love, do not, do not thus drive me to desperation. Accept at least these feeble tokens of my tenderness ; my dear, too virtuous girl ; do you, in turn, render me the justice that is my due. Think, Balas ! that these presents, which I make you with so much pleasure, are the only consola-

## 54 L E T T E R XXI.

tion I have. Grudge me not this relief in my affliction. I suspect thee of avarice! Oh, Leonora! is it possible you can form so wrong a judgment of a heart that is all yours; which beats only for thee? If you should be so cruel as to return me the casket again—Oh! beware of reducing me actually to despair.

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## L E T T E R XXI.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 14.*

**A**S you so peremptorily insist on it, my dear Marquis, I submit, and accept of your superb present. Permit me, however, to conceal the use I intend to make of it, and to keep only the ring. In granting this you will make me happy, as I shall have it in my power to do some good.

L E T -



## LETTER XXII.

*From Valville to the Marquis.**Paris, Dec. 17.*

WHAT is become of you, my dear Marquis, that I have heard no news of you for this week past? Have you not shewn my letters to your mistress? If you have actually carried your weakness so far, I am no longer astonished at your silence. A word with you, my friend; this is past a jest; it is, faith; and I do very seriously assure you, that you are going to ruin yourself. When this foolish fancy goes off, you will be ready to hang yourself. You will afford a perpetual subject for squibs and epigrams. Notices of this sort are disagreeable. If your mistress were really a Vestal, you might possibly find some few votaries of Aftrea among the vulgar, who would admire your conduct; but the dupe of Leonora would not even excite pity. One can never find you at home. Pray come and see me to-morrow. We must really give your manners a turn. I have a design to introduce you to the young Marchioness d'Asterre;

## 56 LETTER XXIII.

it will be a necessary and agreeable diversion, The manners, the *bon ton* of good company, the being accustomed to see it, and the comparisons you will hence be able to make, will soon open your eyes. Adieu, dear Marquis, you will come to-morrow,

## LETTER XXIII.

*From the Marquis to Valville.*

*Paris, Dec. 18.*

**Y**OU cannot imagine, Valville, how much you offend me. You do not reflect how much uneasiness it must give a lover, to see the object of his passion insulted. It requires all the friendship I have for you to plead your excuse. I have never before known you unjust. What has Leonora done to you, that you condemn her so readily? Her situation in life, I own, is despicable; but is it the effect of her choice? May not the unavoidable consequence of her profession, the temptations it exposes her to, the follies and even the vices she has fallen into, be excused by the misfortune of her circumstances, by the abandoned state of her

her education? May they not be effaced by that virtue, of which her heart is now replete? For my own part, that noble frankness, that ingenuous sincerity, with which she makes the most humiliating confessions, are sufficient to make me forget every thing. Oh, my dear Valville! did you but know her soul! Did you but know the use to which she has put the presents I have made her! She has sold the diamonds I gave her, and has given the money to support an honest, distressed family of her acquaintance. She would have concealed it, indeed, from me: But when I happened to be with her yesterday, the poor unfortunates, whom she had relieved, came to throw themselves at her feet, and bathe them with their tears; expressing their gratitude, notwithstanding her injunctions to the contrary, in the most affecting terms. Such, Valville, such is the object of my attachment. Do you conceive then I can be ashamed of her? I should be mean, indeed, not to dare to love virtue for its own sake. Adieu, my friend; believe me, I am unhappy enough without your reproaches. I can by no means accept your offer of introducing me to your young Marchioness.

58 L E T T E R XXIV.

chionefs. In what, pray, does your pretended *bon ton* give her the superiority to Leonora? I desire no dissipation to make me forget my sufferings. I take a pleasure in them, and it is only Leonora that can remove them.

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L E T T E R XXIV.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 26.*

**A**LAS! my dear Marquis! all is over between us. See me no more, nor insist on my seeing you. The horrid situation into which I am reduced by the cruelty of a base and barbarous man, leaves me no other resource than immediate death. That wretch, whom I have unfortunately known from my infancy, that hypocrite, that vile seducer, that La Roche, of whose extravagant behaviour you possibly have already heard; that monster, who, under the pretence of piety, and of a desire to reform me by the means of opulence and even of religion, hath caused me to accept of his favours,-----Oh! I shall never live long enough to be sufficiently ashamed of it. His  
inten-

intentions, after all, were criminal ; I have perceived it, indeed, for some time ; but I was almost afraid to perceive it ; his assistance was necessary, and it was by degrees that he proceeded, at length, to demand the infamous reward of his favours. My hatred, virtue, what shall I say, perhaps my love ; all these united, prevailed over my fear of indigence, and induced me to reject with disdain his horrid proposals. The rage, which this refusal excited in his mean and cruel soul, soon banished his affection. He knew that you was attached to me ; which inflaming his jealousy, he committed the most violent outrages ; turning me ignominiously out of the apartments I lived in, carrying off all my jewels, and, in short, stripping me of every thing.

The loss, indeed, however considerable, gives me no regret, as every thing belonging to such a monster is odious to me : But the insult thus put on me is so public, that my heart bleeds under the cruelty of the mortification. Alas ! even the shadow of reputation, which I flattered myself to have preserved, is taken from me. Adieu, my dear, and too affectionate Marquis ; pity an unhappy victim to the severity of fortune ; but see her no more. If I have  
 merited



## 60 L E T T E R XXV.

merited of you any share of esteem, condescend to retain so precious a memorial of me, and I shall die content.

## LETTER XXV.

*From the Marquis to Leonora,*

*Paris, Dec. 26.*

**H**EAVENS! my dear Leonora, what is it you tell me! Dost thou talk of despair and dying?---I fly to your relief. Amazing insolence! Why did not you inform me.--But it is no time for reflections. The monster shall not escape my vengeance.---In the name of love, let not my dearest, my divine Leonora be cast down. The insults of that abominable wretch are encomiums on thy virtue; and will supply the place of reputation. In two hours, at farthest, I will be with you; mean while I shall hold my time extremely precious. Compose yourself, dear girl; never did I experience before so much love and resentment.

LET-

## LETTER XXVI.

*From M. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.**Paris, Jan. 2.*

I Stand in no need of encouragement, Madam. I will serve the Marquis de Roselle with all my heart; but his passion is so violent that it really terrifies me. The noise which M. de la Roche has made about Leonora, has only served to inflame him the more. In consequence of this, he has placed her in magnificent apartments, which he has furnished for her most superbly; he has presented her with the richest cloaths and jewels; has bought her a chariot, hired her servants, and has settled on her even a larger pension than that she had of la Roche. To effect all this, he hath sold his estate in Picardy; and hath, in so doing, had a quarrel with his brother-in-law, St. Sever. Poor la Roche is obliged to secret himself for fear of being run through the body; which the Marquis threatened. Such, Madam, have been the events of the last four days. M. de St. Sever hath sadly disconcerted our schemes. Endeavour, I beg of you, to prevent

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prevent his interfering any more. I have not lost all hope if I am but permitted to act alone. My valet-de-chambre (for such are the springs I am obliged to set to work) keeps up a constant correspondence with Leonora's woman: It is by these means I hope to compass my end. I should think myself extremely happy to succeed, and to convince you of the greatness of my respect, by the fervency of my zeal.

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L E T T E R XXVII.

*From the Countess de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Jan. 6.*

**H**OW terribly, my dear friend, am I chagrined. You have heard what effects the resentment of M. de la Roche hath produced. My brother came here yesterday; when I could not prevent my husband's speaking to him of the sale of his estate, and giving his opinion, perhaps with too much warmth, about his conduct. He mentioned nothing, however, of Leonora; he promised me he would

# L E T T E R XXVII. 63

would not; but insisted much on the absurdity and extravagance of his general expences. The Marquis would have gone off almost without giving him an answer; but M. de St. Sever stopt him, and continued to make him such remonstrances, as the Marquis had no mind to hear. He could not detain him long, however: This brother, whom I have always found so mild of temper, so affectionate to me, and complacent to my husband, became all at once bold and peremptory, nay, almost insolent. I stand in no need, said he, of a preceptor, nor hath any one a right to controul my actions. Reproof is not the part of a friend. On this he went out in a passion, nor durst I ask him to return. The Count was too much heated as well as the Marquis. It is possible we shall see him no more. What subjects of affliction are these! My husband is incensed against him beyond measure: Adieu, my dear friend, my distresses seem every day to increase.

L E T-

## LETTER XXVIII.

*From Madam de Narton to the Countess de St. Sever.*

*Varennes, Jan. 9.*

**Y**OUR distress is just and natural, my dear Countess : But what relief is it at present that I partake it with you ! I am now, alas ! at too great a distance to give you consolation and dry up your tears. I hope, however, that the ill-success of your husband's scheme will, for the future, render him more circumspect. Use all the influence you have over him, my dear, to engage him to suppress both his zeal and his resentment. Indeed, how can one be really angry at an unhappy youth, under the tyranny of the most violent of all passions. It is no longer himself who thinks, acts, or speaks. Let us treat him as a sick person in the delirium of a fever : Or as one of those unfortunate madmen, whom nature frequently presents to us, as mortifying spectacles of humanity. Your brother is nearly in as terrible a situation. But he will be extricated ; and then his repentance will expiate those offences of which he is at present unconscious.

To



## L E T T E R   XXVIII.   65

To effect this desirable end, it will require very artful management. Let M. de St. Sever content himself with consoling you under your afflictions. Let him interest himself, as much as he pleases, in your brother's reformation; but pray tell him, that I conjure him to trust M. de Ferval with the whole business of bringing it about. Tell him I foresaw the consequence of the step he took, as soon as I read his relation of it. We must not attempt to snatch out precipitately the dart, with which your brother's heart is transfixed; but must endeavour to loosen it, and extract it by degrees. We must oppose art to cunning. An error in the heart is much more difficult to eradicate, with virtuous minds, than an error in the understanding. This is not an irregularity; it is a weakness. Ferval will employ all the means in his power to serve you. The connection which one of his people hath formed with Leonora's chamber-maid, brings him acquainted with a number of little circumstances, and enables him to take his measures accordingly. I doubt not of your often seeing him. Not that he hath made me a confident in his designs; nor perhaps will he make you. He

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## 66 L E T T E R XXVIII.

knows how dangerous it is to make confidants in general, and therefore will absolutely make none. Let him alone. His mother gives him all encouragement, as if his affluity might still be increased. Her letters to him are full only of you, the Marquis, and his unhappy adventure. She and her family are my only company here, and I have no need of any other.

I had not seen her for many years before my arrival: but I found her understanding, her virtues, her character, the same as when I left her. What I could not be acquainted with before, however, are her three daughters; the one eighteen, the other sixteen, and the third fifteen years of age. Imagine to yourself three nymphs, as accomplished and agreeable as you please, provided they are the most amiable I have ever seen. Young as they are, they have nothing of youth about them but its innocence and beauty. They have sense; but their sense is charming, simple as their hearts, and such as would give you an idea of nature truly refined. If I were writing a romance, I could not forbear comparing the dawn of their understandings to the mild and gentle rays of the

## L E T T E R   XXIX.   67

the rising sun. Such, my dear friend, are my companions, with whom I could be extremely happy, if the distressful circumstances, in which I left my dear Countess, would permit me to amuse myself agreeably. The Marquis, I am certain, cannot be wanting in his affection for you. If he should shew, therefore, any desire to see you again, any regret at having given you uneasiness, embrace that opportunity of displaying to him all the tenderness of your affection for him. You should repeat every testimony of your regard, and, above all, take heed to avoid explanations or reproaches; to shun every thing that may tend to mortify him, or touch upon his passion. Adieu, my amiable friend; how much do I suffer in being thus absent from you!

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## L E T T E R   XXIX.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Dec. 28.*

**A**LTHOUGH you have given me your word, my dear Marquis, that you will not see that abominable La Roche, I can hardly be quite satisfied. Forget, if possible,

## 68 L E T T E R XXIX.

the very name of the wretch, I conjure you. He is by no means worth your resentment. For my part, I despise him too much even to wish to be revenged. Promise me that you will never see him. Indeed, I am afraid of him. He has one of the basest of souls. A man of honour can never be on his guard against the designs of a villain.--- I tremble at the very thought. My dear Marquis, forgive my fears. Do me the favour also, to set some bounds to your generosity. I am not formed to become such magnificence. No; it only serves to give me mortification. Is this the appearance of virtue? Permit me to accept of no more presents. I should be extremely unhappy if I were the cause of a rupture between you and the Countess your sister. She must doubtless have heard of your attachment to me; have known the expences I have occasioned you; a circumstance that cannot fail to involve such an affectionate and worthy sister in the utmost affliction. With regard to myself, it is impossible any thing should interest her in my favour. My condition alone is sufficient to render me odious. The Count her husband is a simple, honest man, who loves you sincerely; his

## L E T T E R XXIX. 69

his age, and the care he hath taken of you, give him some right to look into your affairs. He is persuaded that you are going to ruin yourself on my account ; and endeavours to prevent you. How can you blame him ? Add to this, that his intention of getting you well married, is extremely reasonable, and your attachment to me an obstacle to his designs. I am too much your friend, and am under too many obligations to you, not to put you in mind of all these circumstances. Indeed, what other motive can I have for keeping my dear Marquis at a distance ? Let us both equally avoid the progress of a dangerous amour. Let us confine ourselves within the bounds of friendship ; its pleasures may be less delightful, but their consequences will be less painful. Let us see each other but seldom, I beg of you. Seek a relief against your passion among your own relations. Attach yourself, agreeable to their wishes, to some amiable and virtuous object, worthy of your love ; and if the future happiness of your life require it, be Leonora entirely forgotten. Adieu, my dear Marquis, be thou but happy, and my utmost wishes are accomplished.



## LETTER XXX.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.**Paris, Dec. 28.*

**M**Y divine, my adorable girl ! what pleasure you give me ! Forget thee ! Can I wish to forget my Leonora ? No, I would rather die a thousand deaths. What is it to me that my relations are desirous of subjecting me to the disagreeable yoke of marriage ? I will not be made a sacrifice to their intentions. I renounce matrimony for ever. I desire only thee ; thee, my Leonora, whose delightful image entirely possesses my heart. What scruples do you raise against receiving my presents ? I have before desired of you, not to deny me this gratification, the only one permitted me ; and let my relations dispute that point with me. I have promised you I will not see La Roche. I should never stain my sword with the blood of so base a scoundrel, unless in the first transports of my resentment. Be under no apprehensions about him. How great, how noble are your sentiments ! You merit the homage of the universe ! I have read your letter over a thousand

sand

## L E T T E R XXXI. 71

sand times, but it is only to admire your sentiments, without adopting them, and to convert your virtues into arms against yourself.

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## L E T T E R XXXI.

*From Valville to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Jan. 8.*

**I** Abhor the part of a censor: but I cannot help, my dear friend, taking upon myself that office with regard to thee. Thy folly is become public, and the ridicule of it rebounds upon me. Thou hast advertised; posted thyself; sold thy estates; quarrelled with thy relations; in a word, I must tell thee, thou hast broken through all the rules of common sense and decorum.

It is not necessary, indeed, to love one's relations; but one should behave decently to them; see them seldom; but still see them. To come to an open rupture is imprudent; it is to be wanting to one's self. It is absurd to deny one's self the pleasures of gallantry; but one ought to preserve external appearances. We do not take the trouble, now-a-days, to be hypocrites; but we ob-

## 72 L E T T E R XXXI.

serve a decorum. You stand upon nothing, but give headlong into the most absurd and ridiculous passion that can be conceived. You suffer yourself to be deceived by a false pretence to virtue: What an extravagance! Were even her pretensions real, a man must be a dupe, indeed, to attach himself seriously to a woman who advertises herself. To what doth it tend? But, as to the virtue which Leonora displays to fascinate you, it is the falsest of all possible falsehoods.

Since it is that which hath seduced you, I will send, if it be necessary, to cure you of this frenzy, a list of your predecessors: It is at least a numerous one.---Believe me, my dear Marquis, I know Leonora better than you. You are the first and the only one to whom she ever proved unkind. Her pretended frankness, with which you are so taken, is only a refined piece of imposture. However ingenuous are her confessions, depend on it she does not confess all. But is it possible that it should be necessary to convince you by facts, what has been the conduct of an opera girl? Her profession alone is sufficient to condemn her, and her artifices are all too gross.

As

## L E T T E R XXXII. 73

As I now never see you, I have thus taken the liberty to write, and to inform you, that you are become an universal subject of ridicule; which is the greatest misfortune that can happen to a man of your age. Indulge yourself in your pleasures; keep a mistress or two; avoid the lectures of your sister, and the idle remonstrances of your brother-in-law: In all this you will do well; but observe some decorum in the eyes of the world; which will no longer admit of any palliation of your faults. Quit Leonora without hesitation, and we will endeavour to make up all the rest. Adieu.

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## L E T T E R XXXII.

*From the Marquis to Valville.*

*Paris, Jan. 6.*

**T**HIS is too much, Sir. You carry the matter too far. To add calumny to your abuse.---You know not what love is; but I thought you had some regard to the ties of friendship. Your heart is not formed for those affectionate sentiments, which I expect

## 74 L E T T E R XXXIII.

pect to find in my friends. It is that title only which has given you a privilege to trouble me with superfluous advice and impertinent informations. You will be pleased, for the future, to suppress them. Forget me.

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## L E T T E R XXXIII.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

**F**orgive, my Leonora, forgive the effects of an emotion, which it is not in my power to suppress. I dare not avow it. --- Thou wert not formed to be suspected; so that my curiosity cannot arise from jealousy; no, it takes its rise from the most affectionate, the most interesting motives. Oh! my lovely girl, may I venture, without temerity, to beg you would inform me of the contents of that letter you received yesterday at your toilette. I saw it caused an emotion, which in vain you endeavoured to conceal. You let it fall to the ground, and I observed your uneasiness while I stooped to pick it up. I only looked upon the outside, and was going to give it you, when you snatched it precipitately out of my hand. If it brought  
you



# LETTER XXXIII. 75

you news of any happy event, you will not have the cruelty to keep me ignorant of it. If it bring the motives for any uneasiness; have you any that I ought not to partake of? Thou knowest, my dear girl, that my heart is open to every thing that concerns thee. Condescend to trust it with your anxieties.

I observed you yesterday, pensive, absent, and musing: You would every now and then fetch a sigh, and look stedfastly at me. ---I cannot forbear thinking, that I am somehow interested in that letter. I durst not betray the eager desire I had to see it; but it has disturbed me ever since. I conjure you, therefore, if the contents relate only to yourself, or consist in secrets entrusted to you alone, I conjure you to let me know them.---I am too affectionate, my dear Leonora, to appear indiscreet or suspicious; I address myself only to you to know what it is you were fearful of acquainting me with. Adieu. If you have any regard for me, you will not refuse me this proof of your confidence.

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## LETTER XXXIV.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.**Paris, Jan. 21.*

**I**T is impossible for you, my dear Marquis, to see the letter in question. Honour forbids me to shew it you. The secrets of another are not, in any case, in my own power. I beg you will press me no farther on this head, as it is an affair of importance. You must not know it: be not, however, uneasy; it is no misfortune; nay, if circumstances were otherwise than they are, it would perhaps be a fortunate event for me. This is all that prudence, honour, and even gratitude permit me to say on the subject. Adieu, my dear Marquis; you cannot, without great injustice, censure my reserve in this particular.

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## LETTER XXXV.

*From M. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.**Paris, Jan. 25.*

**I** Have gained but little ground, Madam, for the last fortnight; I obtained, however,

ever, yesterday, by means of my valet, an interview with Mrs. Martha, Leonora's waiting-maid. I shall endeavour to give you, as near as I can, the substance of our conversation; with all that expletive loquacity which is inseparable from the conversation of an Abigail.

Mrs. Martha began her discourse, very properly, with protestations of her uncorruptible fidelity to her mistress; assuring me that, with regard to herself, she was very different from most persons in her situation, being a woman of honour and principle. This preamble I knew by heart, as a matter of course; I was obliged, however, to listen, and made a reply to it, by slipping a few pieces of gold into her hand. I could perceive she was pleased with this kind of answer, though she made some shew of reluctance to receive them. I find, Sir, says she, you are a very honest gentleman, and that it is only from a good motive you are desirous of knowing. ---- True, said I, let me know all that passes, and depend on it, you will have no reason to repent it. To be sure, Sir, replied she, I belong to the person of whom I get my bread; and if you,  
Sir,

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Sir, have that charity, I shall certainly serve you. Having thus adjusted the matter with regard to her honour, her conscience, and her interest, she proceeded to inform me, that her mistress was very discreet, and had never trusted her with any of her designs. I have, indeed, some suspicions, continued she, but I cannot say any thing positively. On this I asked her, what might be her suspicions? ---- Why, I surmise, says she, that is, not that I know of a certain --- but ---- certain it is, that she must have some designs upon the Marquis; for she is visited by nobody else. Before the last disturbance, she now and then saw M. de la Roche; for which reason she received the Marquis only at certain hours at which she appointed him; but since her breach with La Roche, we see no gentleman but the Marquis. It is very true that she earnestly desired him not to make her any more presents. At first, indeed, she received them with pleasure; but I know very well, that when he sent her a magnificent present the other day, she was really very angry. I gather from some hints she has given me, that she intends to quit the stage. She talks a deal of virtue, of de-  
corum,

corum, and I know not what. In short, Sir, there must be something beneath all this ; for, though I know but little, yet I know that black is not so easily turned white. Well, but, my good Martha, is it possible she can be without a confident ? Nay, nay, replied she, I don't say that. There is Miss Juliet --- Yes --- Miss Juliet very probably knows what's going forward. --- Who is this Miss Juliet ? said I. --- Why, Sir, you must know, she is a young lady that---that--- What shall I say ? --- A young lady, Sir, like my mistress. She is at present about fifty miles out of town, at the country-house of a very rich gentleman, with whom she is in keeping. She is my mistress's most intimate friend, and often writes to her. Nay, I know nobody else that does write to her ; which makes me so much the more curious to know from whom my mistress received a letter about three days ago, directed in a different hand-writing. I would give a good deal to know the contents of that letter, for I am sure it was not written nor received but with some particular design. Nothing has been said to me about it ; but I am certain there is something I can't find out at the bottom.

My



## 80 L E T T E R - XXXV.

My mistress engaged the Marquis to be with her about noon, an hour she never received him at before ; being the time the post-man usually delivers the letters. He used always to deliver them to me ; but I had orders in the morning to send him up to my mistress. Now it happened accordingly that he actually came to the door while the Marquis was with her, and delivered the letter into her own hands, when she opened and read it with a great many affected airs of concern and importance. After she had read it, she let it fall, as it were accidentally, to the ground ; and snatched it eagerly out of the Marquis's hand, as he was picking it up. You see, Sir, there must be something in all this. --- That she expected that letter is very certain ; what there was in it I know not ; but there is some scheme in it I am positive. To day I found her writing-desk half open ; upon which I locked it and carried her the key : for which she reprimanded me for not minding my own business. But I was no sooner out of the room than she cautiously opened it again. I watched her, without her seeing me, and am sure it was done with some design. Well, said I, and how

## L E T T E R   XXXV.   81

how stands your mistress with the Marquis at present?—Oh! Sir, he perfectly adores her, and I really believe, God forgive me, that he has a true *esteem* for her: For so I think they call it, when a gentleman puts on such an air of timidity and bashfulness. He could not pay more respect to a Dutchess; nor could a Dutchess have more the air and manner of a modest woman than Madam Leonora when the Marquis is with her. I have not been long in her service; her former waiting-maid was dismissed, possibly because she knew too much of what was what.—And pray, said I, what is the general character and disposition of your mistress?—Oh! Sir, replied this communicative Abigail, she is far from being ill-natured. Her place is easy enough, as to that matter; and when she has money she is very liberal: She neither haggles nor beats down any body's price; that I must say for her. They say too that she has a great deal of wit; but of that I know nothing, as she very seldom talks with me. She has been, for some time past, much in her reveries, appearing greatly anxious and disturbed, particularly when she is alone; but in the company of the Marquis she puts on always an air of cheerfulness.

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ness and gaiety.—Well, but, Mrs. Martha, don't you think she grants him the *favour*?—Oh, no, Sir, by no means, I am very certain of that. And, indeed, without that—I understand the way of these ladies, Sir, very well; I have served several of them; and indeed, for the matter of that, their money is as good to a poor body as another's. I take care to keep myself honest, Sir, and that's sufficient for me. To be sure I do really love Madam Leonora; she is my mistress, and so far I know my duty. Nor should I say as much as I have done to any body but your honour: But as you have assured me—And I see it is only with a good intention—Besides, you will take care I shall come to no harm in the affair.—Yes, rest satisfied, Mrs. Martha, about that.

Her tale seeming now to be nearly run down, I was obliged to wind her up again by a fresh proof of my generosity; after which she proceeded with new spirits, to inform me, that the Marquis sent Leonora, a few days since, a magnificent present of jewels; which she at first refused, and was with difficulty prevailed on by his reiterated intreaties to accept. That, after having sold as many of them as brought her six thousand  
livres,

livres, she sent for some poor people of her acquaintance, among whom she distributed, by way of charity, an hundred crowns; as they privately informed Martha. These miserable objects came the next day, while the Marquis was with her, to express their acknowledgment; which they did, with such extravagant encomiums on her goodness and generosity, that the Marquis was fully persuaded she had given them the whole.

Leonora affected to be very uneasy at their coming so unseasonably, though it appears that she appointed them, and played off all the airs of generosity and modesty; completing her design of giving the Marquis an high idea of the beauties of her mind. She hath also given the same people ten louis since, in order to keep them at her devotion; artfully taking care not to specify the particular sum she has given them; so that it is only their appearance of unbounded gratitude that hath exaggerated the charity. And hence it is, that we can make no use of this adventure.

It serves nevertheless to shew the artful character of the woman we have to do with. This, Madam, is all I can arrive at the knowledge of, at present. I have a

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strong inclination to see this Miss Juliet ; and will immediately inform myself farther about her. I want also to penetrate the secret of the letter ; for I shall acquaint you with every thing. Pray keep all this a secret, however, from the Countess. You know her husband, who is still very angry ; and says, if every body had acted as he has done, the Marquis would not have given his family so much uneasiness. His sister, he says, has spoiled him, and therefore he gives him up ; he will have nothing more to do with his affairs. But I know he would be meddling again to-morrow if he could, and so much the worse if he did.

The Countess will hardly keep what she knows altogether a secret from him ; it were prudent, therefore, to let her know nothing of the matter. Let me beg of you to keep her ignorant, at least for the present. Adieu, Madam, please to let my mother and sister take part with you in the assurances of my tenderest respect.

L E T.



## LETTER XXXVI.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.**Paris, Jan. 18.*

**H**OW shall I confess my fault, my dear Leonora ! But, how can I suppress the emotions which that letter—Your writing-desk stood half open ; I was alone in the room, the superscription I knew, and could not refrain from reading—Forgive me, dear Leonora ! but your reserve increased my curiosity. Judge, if thou canst, of my apprehensions, and my fears---Will you accept the offer ? The answer you gave me yesterday, encourages me to think you will not.---But, good God ! what a trial ! If you do not love me to excess, I am undone ! Assure me of your refusal---But, shall I prevent your happiness ? Shall I oppose your making your fortune ? Yet, can I consent to lose you ? I am in a state of desperation---There, take back the fatal letter. Fatal, do I say ? Ought such an instance of the perfect homage paid to virtue, to be called fatal ? Alas ! Leonora, I know not what I say, what I wish, nor what I fear. My present agitation rends my heart, my situation is truly deplorable. Tell me, pray tell me, who is

## 86 L E T T E R XXXVII.

this heroic, this virtuous, this worthy man, who thus offers you his hand. Happy man ! that he can dispose of it at his pleasure.

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## L E T T E R XXXVII.

*Found in Leonora's Writing-Desk.*

*Tours, Jan. 11.*

**T**HE contempt, Madam, with which you returned my passion, after having deprived me of all kind of hope, hath at length undeceived me. I thought myself affectionate ; but I was cruel, I was unjust ; and you banished me deservedly your presence. How heavily hath the time passed away for these twelve months past, that I have endured your absence, in this melancholy retreat ! Believe me, I have sufficiently expiated the crime of not having done justice to your prudence. Blind as I was, I did not see into the cause of your refusal. I took it for the effect of caprice, or of hatred : I did not think I was insulting you. Shall I confess the truth, Madam ? Your situation in life, and the prejudices attending it, would not permit me to entertain the least idea of your being virtuous. Your beauty had captivated me, my desires

# LETTER XXXVII. 87

desires were ardent ; and I would readily have sacrificed to you my whole fortune ; but nothing more. But what a sacrifice would that have been to you ! I have been since, Madam, attentive to your conduct, which hath so far confirmed my regard and repentance, that I shall think myself happy, if you can forgive those involuntary offences which I now blush to recollect. I am now sensible of that admirable motive on which you acted ; and the shocking idea of being odious to you, torments me no longer. My manners are also reformed ; it is no longer a base seducer, who offers himself to your regard ; but an honest man, more sensible even of your virtues than your charms, who conjures you to accept, with his hand, an homage more worthy, and the only one he can render to you. Yes, Madam, such is the united effect of my passion and your virtues. My resolution is taken. I can dispose of my hand as I please ; I despise the prepossessions of the world : I would be happy, and cannot be so without you. My reputation will be too dearly preserved, if it must be made an obstacle to my happiness. My fortune, considerable as it is, is but an additional motive for my con-

## 88 LETTER XXXVIII.

sulting only my own inclination. Consult only yours, Madam, to confirm my happiness, and my destiny will be justly to be envied.

D'ALBEVILLE.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Jan. 24.*

**Y**OU have been essentially deficient, Sir, not only to love, but to good-manners. I refused to entrust you with a secret, the secret of a third person, and you have robbed me of it, in a manner most unworthy of you. Ah! Where is virtue? Where is sincere affection, if not to be found in the hearts of those, who know so well how to speak its language? I do not desire to be made acquainted with your motives for such an action; they are perhaps too injurious to me, and I had rather you alone should have occasion to blush for them.

It was, doubtless, an act of imprudence in me, to leave my writing-desk open, but it ought not to have been such with regard to you. Precautions are not taken to secure us from the good and worthy; our security lies in their very probity itself. And yet not even  
love,

## LETTER XXXVIII. 89

love, whose first law enjoins us to respect the object beloved, could restrain your hand. I see nothing in this action of the Marquis de Roselle; you are no longer the person who inspired me with the purest of sentiments.---If I thought --- But, no, I cannot think it.---I see even you have your intervals of weakness.---I know not why I find myself disposed to forgive you. Perhaps my self-love is flattered, at seeming to you worthy of some esteem. Perhaps it is this circumstance that will open to you my heart. As you have taken my secret from me, I will not conceal from you my resolutions. You doubtless have some remorse, but I will not reproach you. To make you easy, I will own I forgive you, and will endeavour to give you some further assurance on this subject.

The idea which I have formed of marriage, is that of an obligation too refined and sacred to be made a mere matter of bargain and sale. My present situation, it is true, is contemptible, my family obscure, and indigence is terrible. The offer which has been made me, would have set me above the world, above either want or contempt: but not even this consideration can ever engage me to  
avow



90 LETTER XXXIX.

avow an affection I do not, nor ever can, feel. A sense of probity hath stifled that of ambition. I may possibly be despised by others, but I shall never be despicable in my own eyes, while I can justly boast of having deceived no one. Such, my dear Marquis, are my sentiments. My answer is made; therefore give yourself no trouble to enquire who this worthy and unsuccessful lover is. I never can love him, but owe him, nevertheless, eternal acknowledgments and inviolable secrecy.

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LETTER XXXIX.

*From Madam de Ferval to Mr. de Ferval,  
her son.*

*Ferval, Jan. 28.*

MADAM de Narton, my dear son, has communicated to me your letter; I know your heart too well to doubt of your zeal. We are delighted with it, as truly estimable. The service you are engaged in, is important, and worthy of a virtuous mind. But, my dear Ferval, endeavour to employ, in so honest a design, only honest means. It is always disagreeable to have recourse to such as are otherwise: I chose myself to mention

to

## L E T T E R   X X X I X.   91

to you this circumstance. I am sensible that Leonora merits no kind of respect, but you should act towards her with justice. This is an indispensable consideration we owe to every one; and is certainly broken through by your corrupting her domesticks. I know the circumstances, in which you find yourself, seem to authorize this proceeding: But, my dear son, rather redouble your assiduity, and apply only to those, with whose assistance you may not reproach yourself. You will think, perhaps, my delicacy, in this particular, a little too refined; I hope not; that delicacy, my son, arises only from a sense of probity.---If you could find means, indeed, to see that Juliet you speak of---But I know too little of the matter to enter into your designs. It is very certain nothing can redound more to your honour, than the confidence which Madam de Narton and the Countess de St. Sever have placed in you. I am as certain, also, that it could not be better placed. The dangers, into which you see the blind attachment of the Marquis has betrayed him, ought to increase your own detestation against vice; as the steps you are taking to reclaim him, ought to be so many engagements to bind you to virtue.

Adieu,

92 L E T T E R XL.

Adieu, my child ; Madam de Narton assures you of her friendship, and your sisters of their kindest affections. You well know how dear you are to me.

---

L E T T E R XL.

*From Mr. de Ferval to his Mother.*

*Paris, Jan. 31.*

**I** Have no less repugnance, my dear mother, than yourself, to make use of such means as I am obliged to employ : But the peculiar nature of the affair, and the confidence placed in me, require it. Be assured, that in the execution of any plan for making my own fortune, I should not have recourse to such means. I could wish, with all my soul, there was no need of it in this. But, without the assistance of Martha, could I ever have procured a sight of the two letters from Juliet, which I have copied and sent you ? I could not possibly keep the originals ; you may gather from these what light may be thrown, by the others, on the whole conduct of Leonora. You will soon become perfectly acquainted with her designs, if we continue to observe a little artful management.

ment. Vice would have too much to boast of, if virtue were only to employ against it those means which might be authorized by the severest austerity. There are occasions on which the goodness of the end may excuse, if not justify the means. I have been able to make no farther discovery than the inclosed letters, for this week past. The Marquis sees no company; but spends his time either in regretting the short visits Leonora permits him to make her, or in wishing to repeat them, that he may again indulge the same regret. His mind is entirely engrossed by this one object. He hath quarrelled with his friend Valville; which is matter of great triumph to Leonora, who is therefore highly delighted with it. But I hasten to finish my own letter, in order that you may peruse those of Miss Juliet. May I beg of you to pay my profoundest respects to Madam de Narton. My sisters are sensible how much I love them. Inclosed are the new songs they asked for. Permit me, dear mother, to repeat the assurances of my tenderest love and respect.

L E T.

## L E T T E R XLI.

*From Juliet to Leonora, inclosed in the preceding.*

*Dec. 18.*

**Y** Our lover, my dear, must be a most strange kind of creature. To be sure, you manage him well ; but are you certain that his passion is of a nature to bear the mortification of your refusals ? This is what I am afraid of. Accept, therefore, all his presents ; put as decent a face on the matter as you will ; but still, I say, refuse nothing. Go affairs as they will, these are so much clear gain. I am very sorry I cannot send you little Bizac, as he is at present bound to the chariot of a rich, old, foolish widow, in this country, who is ridiculously in love with him. He cannot leave this prize, without running the hazard of losing all the time and trouble he has been at to gain it. In a word, his fortune depends on her. It is pity ! That artful Gascoon would have personated to the life the unfortunate, virtuous, respectful, generous rival of your booby Marquis. Can I be any other way serviceable to you ? Your adventure is really singular. For my part, I never had the art  
thus



# L E T T E R XLI. 95

thus to captivate such young and unexperienced hearts. My old lover is a formidable creature, jealous, tyrannical, troublesome, and brutal ; I have been mortified to death for these three months that I have been here : but he makes me considerable presents, and therefore I bear with him. It is necessary to make provision against the winter. I have a longing desire to see your little Marquis. It must be very pleasant to hear him offer his *esteem* ! ---For heaven's sake, where did he get that word ? It must sound very strange to you, at first ! Poor boy ! I am absolutely in love with him, he is so very foolish ! But you will teach him wit, and it is but just he should pay for his learning. He sets out a dupe, and will finish his studies a knave. It is the way of the world. Farewell, you little hussy, I have not let Bizac into your secret, because he could be of no use to you. I am wild, but I have nevertheless some little discretion. Adieu.

L E T-

## LETTER XLII.

*From Juliet to Leonora, inclosed also with the preceding, in the last of Mr. de Ferval.*

*Saint Fermin, Jan. 16.*

WELL, thy projects are really astonishing! A woman of quality, truly! And thou dost intend, my dear, if thou canst, to marry this Marquis!---It must be owned, you do very well; for, at the worst, you risk nothing, if you should not succeed. Between ourselves, however, how can you think of playing the dull, moping part of a modest woman? It will be a high comedy. We shall see how you will shine in it. I love dearly to see you got upon the highropes of quality. --- If you succeed, you will be the heroine of our whole company. Who knows how far your example --- Yes, there are a number of fools, who only wait to be taught how to make themselves ridiculous. In time these extraordinary things will become so common, that nobody will take notice of them; it is just as we are reconciled to people's faces who are ugly. At times even my old ape amuses me. Those periods are but few and short, indeed: But  
what

what can I do ? Every body was not born for great adventures, as you are. See what it is to possess at once beauty, wit, and fortitude. I have long known your extraordinary talents ; and yet, notwithstanding that, you quite astonish me. Proceed, carry your point if possible ; you may command me in any thing. Your interests are mine. I have carefully copied the letter you sent me, and have dispatched it safely to the post-house at Tours. I did not chuse to put it in here, so near ; the distance of Tours, the greatness of that city, and all together, will serve the better to amuse the reader. This letter will certainly be with you by Thursday noon ; so manage your matters accordingly. I hope you will acquaint me with the effect of this little artifice. If I were in your place, however, I would make sure of something before I quitted the Opera. For, after all, that sister of his, that Valville too, and all these people, may find means to cool the Marquis's courage. Think what an affair it will be for him to marry thee. I say again, however, fear nothing from me ; I shall say nothing to Bizac, whose hands are sufficiently full with his widow. He hath already got above twenty thousand livres from her ; which is

much better for him than the protection of La Roche. But, now we are on the subject of La Roche, what if he should relate his story to the Marquis? You should take particular care, if possible, to prevent their meeting. You have done wisely in preventing it hitherto. Adieu, my dear, forget not your poor Juliet, when you are my Lady Marchioness.

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## LETTER XLIII.

*From Madam de Narton to Ferval.*

Varennnes, Feb. 6.

AT present, Sir, we see very clearly into the design of Leonora; but this design is terrible. Poor Madam de St. Sever! What would become of her, if she knew all? I shall take care not to let her see the danger. Her grief would betray the secret, and her husband would ruin every thing. Put every thing in practice to prevent this triumph of vice, and be a little above the scruples suggested by your good mother; which I should regard myself, however, upon any other occasion. What rashness there is in the projects of that wretched Leonora! You can lay down no fixed plan, but must be

## L E T T E R XLIV. 99

be directed by circumstances; I am certain you will take every occasion to profit by them. The most valuable interests of an honourable family are now in your hands. What a credit it is for a person of your age to merit so much esteem as to be charged with so nice a trust! Go, from time to time, I beg of you, to comfort my unhappy friend. I again repeat, that I shall tell her nothing. Adieu, Sir; depend on it I shall never forget how much I owe to your zeal,

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## L E T T E R XLIV.

*From Madam de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Feb. 20.*

**I**HAVE not once seen my brother, my dear friend, since what happened about two months ago. I have gathered from his people, that he keeps no company, except that woman, whom he hath visited more frequently than ordinary within this week. I know not what passed between them yesterday, but the Marquis returned from her lodgings in a great agitation. He passed the night in walking backwards and forwards in his chamber; and having written



to her this morning, her answer threw him into all the appearances of great distress. Her servants say that, when my brother came into that creature's apartment yesterday, she was dressed in a studied deshabille, and seated on a couch, leaning backwards in a very seductive attitude. The kind of despair he was in last night, and which he could not conceal from his domestics, made them think that Leonora was sick. On their enquiry, however, this morning, her woman told them she was very well. Were it possible, my dear, that some misunderstanding between them should proceed to a rupture—But I dare not flatter myself so far. You have heard, without doubt, that Madame de St. Albin is married to Baron d'Orbe. This wedding has farther increased my chagrin. I cannot help regretting she was not destined for my unhappy brother. But at present we have only to think how we may extricate him from the danger he is in. I am very much obliged to Mr. de Ferval, for the pains he hath taken; but I fear he may be disgusted at meeting with so many obstacles. Has he any hopes of success? It is to me astonishing that he knows so little of my brother's conduct. I know more of it than he.

L E T T E R XLV. 101

he. After what you have told me of his mother and sisters, I cannot but think you very happy in the neighbourhood of so charming a family. Adieu, my dear friend ; desire Madam de Ferval to join her interest with ours, to engage her son to be assiduous in this affair. He is very deserving, and hath much consideration for me ; but I fear he does not pursue this business closely. But let not his mother know of these my apprehensions.

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L E T T E R XLV.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

*Paris, Feb. 19.*

C RUEL creature ! You forbid me then to see you ! Unhappy as I am, what crime have I committed ? What but that of loving you to distraction ? But how can I love thee otherwise ? Forbid me to see you ! If thus you chose to return my assiduity and tenderness, ought you to carry your barbarity so far as to increase my passion till I am no longer master of myself ? Canst thou think, my adorable girl, that I can ever fail in point of respect to you ? No, my dear Leonora ; even yesterday, in that fatal moment when the excess of my passion prompted

## 102 L E T T E R XLVI.

me to --- Did you not then see the shame, repentance, the terrible confusion, into which your reproaches threw me? I even adore that virtue which reduces me to despair. I swear to you, by all that is sacred, that I never more will offend your modesty; but do not deprive me of the only happiness I have left, the pleasure of seeing you. Consider, my divine charmer, consider that my life depends on it. I have sacrificed, alas! every thing to Leonora. You required me to break with Valville: it is done. I no longer continue to see my sister; my dear, my affectionate sister. How unhappy! O fatal passion! terrible connections! Forgive, forgive, my dear Leonora; thy love may yet make me happy; deign to return my passion, to see me again, and I will forget all the rest of the world. For nothing is of any consequence to me but thee.

## L E T T E R XLVI.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Feb. 20.*

**N**O, Sir, it is impossible for me to see you without danger. I see it, I tremble at it, and will never expose myself to the like

# LETTER XLVI. 103

like again. I do love you --- This is the first time I have made that confession, and it shall be the last. I will see you no more. It is indeed a considerable sacrifice I make; but it is what I owe to virtue. After such an unhappy trial, can I, without a criminal temerity, depend on that reserve you promise? It is impossible. Believe me, my dear Marquis, believe me, it costs me not a little to keep you from me, to tear you from my heart. --- But, forget this fatal love, suppress this dangerous passion. Be happy, and reflect, if I were ever dear to you, that my honour is the only good I have left: rob me not of that. Take back your presents, I can keep none of them; but my heart will ever retain the grateful remembrance that they were once bestowed. A ray of light begins to illuminate my soul. --- Enquire not what I am going to be. I take my leave of the Opera. Ah! why did I not leave it sooner! Wrapt up in my innocence and obscurity, without fortune but without remorse, I shall be able to subsist on my labour, without standing in need of the perfidious presents of men. The difficulty I shall have in accustoming myself to a life of labour and solitude, will be the first expiation of the faults,



faults, which the condition to which I have been bred may have caused me to commit. My conscience is pure ; let me then banish from my heart the image of a man I have loved too well ; and mayst thou triumph over your passion in like manner. Adieu.

## L E T T E R XLVII.

*From M. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Feb. 20.*

**H**AVING heard that the Marquis left the apartments of Leonora last night, with an air of desparation ; I procured an audience of Mrs. Martha to-day, in order to know if there was any likelihood of a rupture, and the occasion of the Marquis's chagrin. Mrs. Martha's information was as follows. Ever since the affair of the letter, the Marquis has been more frequent in his visits than before ; sometimes spending the whole day with Leonora ; of whom he seems more fond, than ever ; while on her part she looks still handsomer every day ; taking all the pains in the world to set herself off by her dress. In short, says Martha, we have now never done with the toilette. The putting on a hand-



## L E T T E R XLVII. 105

a handkerchief only takes up sometimes half an hour. And this is done with so much affectation ---- very modestly covering the breast on one side, and on the other displaced as it were by accident. Sometimes she is employed in dressing when the Marquis comes in ; when she plays off all her little artifices and premeditated mistakes, which --- which --- stay till I recollect --- aye, “ which give “ even to voluptuousness the charms of modesty,” as the Marquis says. You must know, that he caught her yesterday before she had adjusted her tucker, when in haste she threw a cloak over her shoulders, but so loosely, that I who stood behind her chair presently saw it slipping down behind, and would accordingly have drawn it up gently on her shoulders again. But she, perceiving my design, turned herself hastily about, and let it drop off entirely. O horrible ! said she, rising up in seeming confusion ; and, striving modestly to hide her neck with her hand, pretended to look about for a handkerchief. It was to no purpose that I offered her the cloak ; she kept still chiding me, till recovering, as it were, from her surprize ; O, my God ! said she, I was looking for another.

other. Come, give me that, and be more careful another time.

I can assure you, continued my informant, that this piece of finesse was premeditated. In the mean time, the Marquis almost devoured her with his eyes. Soon after, she complained of the head-ach, and intimating she had need of rest, the Marquis left her. As soon as he was gone, she new-dressed herself in a most ravishing undress, putting on an agreeable cap tied with a rose-coloured ribband, a bed-gown of rose-coloured taffety, ornamented with white lace, and a petticoat of the same; in short, her whole dress was calculated to set her forth to the best advantage. Never did I see any thing so pretty; she was then certainly the finest brunette in the world; nor did ever her large black eyes appear more sparkling than through that look of languishment which I observed her practise in the glass. An air of tenderness, diffused over her whole countenance, made her indeed altogether charming. I don't know whether you know her smile; but it is enchanting. Her very fine leg is seen also to great advantage in this undress. She was a long time at her toilette; after which she seated herself upon a sofa, reclining on a heap

of  
much

of cushions; an attitude that displayed her hands and arms to perfection. Then ordering me to shut the window-curtain, I was dismissed. It was not long before the Marquis returned. I know not what passed between them, but of a sudden her bell rung violently. I ran up, and found the Marquis at her feet, in a strange kind of confusion. Stay in the anti-chamber, Martha, says she. And you, Sir, speaking to the Marquis, please to be gone. I went out, and so could not hear distinctly what passed; but she talked much of insult, of being surprized, and so forth; to all which the Marquis replied only by sighs. In about a quarter of an hour he took his leave, crossing the anti-chamber with his handkerchief up to his eyes. I observed him also as he went out, lift up one of his hands to heaven, and cry out pathetically, *Unhappy as I am! Is it possible!* After his departure my mistress seemed very thoughtful and disturbed, and sat down to write a letter. This is very certain, that the this day quitted the Opera. The Marquis lent to her again to-day; she was in her closet, where I watched her without being seen, while she read his letter. In the perusal of it, she shook her head two or three times, with an air of  
much

## 108 L E T T E R XLVII.

much concern, ending it with the exclamation, *Oh! he must come hither again; he will be here again.* Having given this letter another reading, she called for pen and ink, and sat down to answer it. She was a long time, a very long time in writing the answer. I believe she began her letter over again several times. At length, however, she sent it. This is all I know, Sir, of the adventure; and I am not such a fool but I can see.

— Go, go, she does nothing without having a design in it. That head-ach yesterday, and so much trouble in dressing! I know —

Tedious as Mrs. Martha's history had been, she seemed not to have any inclination to finish it. I was obliged, therefore, to make use of the same means to obtain her silence, as I had done to make her speak; by giving her some solid proofs of my gratitude. Upon which, dropping me a curtsey, she reassured me that I should always find her a woman of her word, for that she never knew what it was to deceive any one. So, promising to let me know the issue of this adventure, we parted.

It must be confessed, that this Leonora is a very artful woman. I pity the Marquis extremely. I am afraid — but I shall see

Juliet



# LETTER XLVII. 109

Juliet one of these days ; she is expected here directly. That Bizac, she speaks of, is an adventurer of an agreeable figure enough. Leonora assists him, only because she once admired him ; she presented him to La Rochie as her relation, and he gave him some little employ ; of which he has deprived him again since his rupture with Leonora. This fellow, it seems, has got into the good graces of a foolish old woman, whom he is bringing to ruin as fast as he can. He is one of Leonora's best friends ; but Juliet only is her confident. You see, Madam, it is impossible to get better information. I have not endeavoured to see the Marquis of late. It were to no purpose, as I am certain he is more passionately in love than ever. I do my best, however, to console Madam de St. Sever, and to conceal from her every thing that might increase her chagrin. Her apprehensions and uneasiness greatly affect me. She is really a most respectable woman ; and her husband wants only a little discretion, and a little wit, to be a very polite man ; but I am greatly afraid of his intermeddling in this affair. Adieu, Madam, I hope you never will have any occasion to regret the confidence with which you have honoured me.

LET



## LETTER XLVIII.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.**Paris, Febr 22.*

**W**HERE is the monster so savage as  
 to resist so many charms! I should  
 blush for myself if I were not vanquished.  
 Am I then dear to you, my adorable girl?  
 Is it for my sake you have disdained to ac-  
 cept an offer that would have made your  
 fortune? Have you done this for me, and  
 shall I see you plunged into indigence and  
 misery? Is this the price — Your virtue,  
 still more powerful than your love, banishes  
 me for ever. — I have indeed too well de-  
 served this treatment; but let me intreat  
 you, my dear Leonora, to forget, to forgive.  
 — Let the gift of my hand repair the errors  
 my transports have committed. Deign to  
 accept of my hand, and be the happiness of  
 my life. A secret but lawful union shall  
 join our hearts for ever; and we will enjoy  
 the purest happiness in the midst of virtue  
 and pleasure. Forgive, my dear girl, the  
 precautions which I owe to my name and  
 family, to the prejudices of mankind. Un-  
 happy prejudices! These only have hitherto  
 restrained me from doing you justice. Ah!

why

## L E T T E R   X L I X.   111

why cannot I acknowledge you for my wife in the face of the whole universe! This would be a noble triumph for thy virtue; but let the affection and tenderness of thy husband supply the place of that rank and those honours which are so justly your due. O my Leonora! how terribly am I affected! Will you not permit me to see you to-day? I will not offend your delicacy, by saying any thing of the situation, of which I give you the strongest assurance. Your beauty, my dear girl, your virtue, my own love, my esteem, my gratitude; such is the source of your privileges and my obligations.

## L E T T E R   X L I X.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Feb. 23.*

**I** AM sensible, as I ought, my dear Marquis, of the value of that sacrifice you are willing to make me. My heart is penetrated with gratitude; but it is not seduced by that generous offer, which I cannot, which I ought not to accept. My fortune is too cruel, perhaps; but I was not born for you. I know that you can never avow such a marriage. The distance there is between

us,

us, the profession it was my misfortune to be brought up to, in short, every thing opposes such an avowal. And how shall I expose myself to the inevitable danger of a secret union? No, my dear Marquis, I should prefer indigence, even the severest indigence, to such a state of mortification. What should I not suffer from the reflection, that in me the world despised your wife, and that the secret you would be obliged to keep authorized that contempt. You would soon experience what reason you would have to blush for such an union; as the meanness of my condition would debase yours. Your relations, your friends, the public, ignorant or pretending to be ignorant of your marriage, would throw out such animadversions on your conduct, as you would feel by so much the more severely, as you would be destitute of the means to evade them. How would all this embitter both your life and mine? Our misfortunes might extend, indeed, still farther. Renounce, therefore, my dear Marquis, such impracticable projects! Forget your fatal passion, and let us never see each other more. Never, do I say! And can I pronounce that word? Cruel fortune! --- I should not merit, however, those senti-  
ments

ments with which you honour me, if I did not act thus. What dignity, in my own opinion, do you confer on me by your esteem! I shall for the future regard myself as the woman whom the Marquis de Roselle hath designed to set upon an equality with himself. What an encouragement is this to virtue! Adieu for ever.

L E T T E R L.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

*Paris, Feb. 22.*

**I**NHUMAN, barbarous creature! Is it possible --- Will my life only satisfy your cruelty? What terrible consequences doth your imagination present to you? My fortune lies at your feet. I will settle upon you two thirds of it on the day of marriage. You are sensible, alas! how little it is in my power to do more. Wretched as I am! And hast thou really given orders to be denied to me? Does Leonora forbid me her house?--Heavens! What will become of me? At once furious and feeble, the miserable sport of passions and prejudices. Oh, Leonora! In the name of that virtue which is so dear to you, save me, save me from despair.



## LETTER LI.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.**Paris, Feb. 24.*

**I**T is done, my dear Roselle; tho' I should die with grief, tho' I should incur your hate, my resolution is taken. Permit me to give you an example of fortitude. I will never accept the hand of a man, who should blush at being thought my husband. Not poverty, not death itself, can appear so terrible to me as such a state of humiliation. Had I been born — But suppress that supposition. Banish even the idea of Leonora; whom you will see no more. Think me dead to you, and you shall live eternally in my heart. — What have I said? Unfortunate creature! If you have found any virtues in my conduct, if I have, in any degree, merited your esteem, have some regard to those misfortunes you have brought on me. Cease to disturb my repose. I will pay a due regard to yours. Expect no other answer. Adversity hath given me courage, do thou follow my example. O! Alas! what comparison is there between your situation and mine! Your rank, your fortune, your youth, present you with the brilliant prospect of an happy



## L E T T E R LII. 115

futurity : for me, without resources, without fortune, without friends --- But I will not proceed in the picture. Adieu, my dear, my too susceptible Marquis ; this is the last letter I shall write you, being myself afraid of that tenderness which it is my duty to resist. Alas ! how shall I be able to do it ? For you, indeed, the honour of having overcome your passion, of having sacrificed to your name and family what you conceived to be your happiness, that honour which so many efforts render more conspicuous, will soon indemnify you for the sacrifice you have made.

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## L E T T E R LIII.

*From the Countess de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Feb. 28.*

**M**Y brother is so extremely ill, my dear friend, that his life is in danger. --- I have just been to see him. --- Good heaven, support me. --- I am quite overcome. Mr. de Ferval will write to you of the particulars.

## LETTER LIII.

*From Mr. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, March 2.*

**Y**OU are already informed, Madam, of the extremity to which our dear Roselle is reduced. About four days after the scene which passed between her and the Marquis at her lodgings, she totally refused him admittance. He returned grievously agitated, and wrote to her. The answer he received from her (the particulars of which I knew not) threw him into despair. He fell senseless to the ground, while the blood, thrown violently upwards to his head, swelled the vessels about his throat, and almost suffocated him. He was let blood immediately, but this did not prevent a fever, which hath confined him to his bed for three days, during which time he hath been bled four times. Yesterday morning he had another violent fit; in the transports of which he called several times on Leonora, taking every body that approached him for that creature. His paroxysms are long. I revisited him yesterday evening; when I found him more tranquil, the fit was gone off, and he had very little fever: but he was extremely faint and weak. I could see the tears

steal

# LETTER LIII. 117

steal down his cheeks, as I approached his bed, which greatly affected me, as did also his manner of thanking me for the proofs I gave him of my friendship. He begged of me to continue to come every day, and not to abandon him. I promised I would not leave him; and took that opportunity to speak to him of his sister, asking him if he would not chuse to see her. At this question he fetched a deep sigh, and covered his face with the bed-cloaths. I went immediately to acquaint the Countess of her brother's illness; which I did with all the necessary precautions, to prevent alarming her. She set out directly to pay him a visit. When she came to his bedside, they looked affectionately at each other, and wept, for some time, in mournful silence. The Physician being apprehensive that this moving interview might be attended with bad consequences, the poor Countess was obliged to retire. This morning she came again, and was present during another paroxysm of her unhappy brother; who did not even know her till after the fit was over. She now determines not to leave him. He is a little better this evening. I will inform you daily of the state of his illness.

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*March 3.*

HE hath been very ill again all night. The Countess, having asked the physician's opinion, thought it necessary for her to think of advising her brother to prepare for the worst. With this view, that worthy sister, mustering up her whole fortitude, placed herself by the side of his bed, as he came out of one of his fits, and, taking him affectionately by the hand, asked him how he found himself? Very poorly, said he; I am afraid, my dear sister, that I am dangerously ill. I hope, brother, replied she, your case is not quite desperate, if we take care; your youth and the goodness of your constitution are powerful resources. Your illness, to be sure, is dangerous, and may vary every moment; the least trouble or agitation may affect you much. --- I have a great deal to do, sister, and I am by no means tranquil. --- An entire submission, brother, to the will of the Supreme Being, a perfect confidence in his goodness, a clear conscience. --- Nay, Mine reproaches me only with foibles; but, my dear sister, do you believe that --- I believe, my dear friend, that God will restore you to our prayers; but I think it is of him only you will obtain that tranquillity of which you stand



stand so much in need. You are not dying, but sick --- Alas ! said he, I should never regret the loss of life, if --- You should be reconciled, brother, to part with it, whenever it is the will of God. A perfect resignation to the decrees of Providence is necessary to all ; but it is the duty of a Christian. --- Alas ! my sister, other causes --- O ! trouble not yourself, my dear friend, about any thing but what relates to heaven ; turn your thoughts from all other objects. --- Ah ! may I, can I do this ? --- Yes, by assistance from above. --- And do you think, sister, I am going to die ? Do you really think so ? Answer me, --- I hope, brother, you will not die ; but God only knows. --- Am I then in danger ? --- You have been, and may fall again into the same distress. --- The will of heaven be done, replied he ; I have a great many affairs to settle. I desire --- Yes, you, my sister, will be my executrix ; I will entrust you to fulfill my desires. --- I hope, my dear brother --- Heaven preserve me from that misfortune ; but, if it should happen, you may depend on me. --- I do depend on it. --- A fainting fit, now seizing him, interrupted this interesting conversation. He recovered by degrees in about half an hour ;



hour; but was then so extremely weak, that the Countess drew his curtains, and passed the rest of the night by the side of his bed without speaking to him. In the morning the Physicians found him much better. And I could not help telling Madam de St. Sever how much I had admired her behaviour. Alas, Sir, replied she, these occasions are very terrible: but how can we neglect such important duties? It was my business to prepare my brother to think of death; a more solemn preparation might have terrified him. He would have conceited himself in a manner already dead; and this terror, added to the weakness he labours under from sickness, would have served rather to depress his spirits than support them. One cannot too soon advise the sick to apply to God; but we ought ever to avoid throwing them into horrors equally detrimental to the mind as well as the body. It is necessary to prepare him, by representing to him the danger of his situation; but the dearest friends ought to undertake this alarming representation. Affection and confidence are never more indispensibly necessary than on this occasion.

The Marquis, after his paroxysm was over, which was shorter and milder than the preceding,

preceding, seemed desirous of talking to his sister again about his affairs, and of relieving himself of something lying on his conscience. His sister, however, interrupted him. You are now better, my dear, said she, and have need of some repose. Compose yourself, my dear, and fear nothing; I will be constantly with you. --- But if I should relapse again into the same danger --- I shall perceive it, my dear brother, and will give you timely notice. --- You promise so to do. --- Yes, I do. --- I shall have a considerable legacy to make. --- Sir, said she, turning to the Physician, do you think it safe for my brother to write. By no means, replied the Doctor; it will be very imprudent to put himself into any agitation. Well then, sister, said Roselle, I will tell it you --- If I should die indeed, there would be no occasion for a written testament with you. --- But your husband, Mr. de St. Sever --- I will answer for him as well as for myself. --- But perhaps, sister, the object of my generosity may not appear to you worthy of it. --- Alas, brother, if I should be so unhappy as to have such a mournful duty to discharge, you may be assured I shall respect only your intentions, bestow your gifts on whomsoever you please.

I am

I am not insensible of the regard which is due to the dying requests of --- Here the tears burst from her eyes; her heart was too full to proceed. The Marquis raised his head with difficulty, and, seeing her situation, gently pressed her hand, while both kept looking at each other in affectionate silence, till at length the Marquis fell into a gentle sleep. I now prevailed on the Countess to take a little repose.

*March 4.*

EVERY thing continues favourable, and the Physician gives us great hopes. The fever is much abated since the fine sleep the Marquis got yesterday. He had a return of the fit, however, to night, but his transports were not so violent. In his delirium he kept constantly calling out on Leonora. I could only distinguish her name, blended inarticulately with the words, *religion --- honour --- love*, and sometimes, *my sister --- my dear sister --- forgive --- forgive me --- virtue, --- &c.* His agitation was very great in pronouncing these words; tho' the fit did not last long. He has been very tranquil this morning: Mr. de St. Sever does not stir from the antichamber. He has even insisted on coming into the room; but as the Marquis

quis has not seen him since what passed between them about six weeks ago, we are afraid his presence now might discompose him too much. We dare not admit him therefore as yet; which is a circumstance that adds to the embarrassment of the Countess; who supports the fatigue of being, strictly speaking, her brother's nurse, with surprizing courage and assiduity.

*March 5.*

HAVE I not always told you, Madam, that Count de St. Sever was an invincible Marplot, and that he would be perpetually doing mischief, tho' meaning well? The patient had passed a tolerable night; his fit was still shorter and less violent than that of yesterday. At eight o'clock this morning he was in a profound sleep. The Countess, as well as myself, had fallen to sleep also, from the fatigue of having been kept awake for several preceding nights, Mr. de St. Sever seized this opportunity to come into the chamber; when, pushing the servants aside, he ran to the bed, and hastily throwing open the curtains, suddenly awakened the poor Marquis, who started up, while the Count addressed him with great concern and vociferousness.



ferousness. "Good morning to my good friend: What, would you not let me see you? I am sure I love you as if you were my own son." --- At this he wept. In the mean time, the astonished Marquis knew not who was speaking to him; till, awakened at the noise, we ran to the bed. Bless me! Sir, said Madam de St. Sever, how could you be so imprudent as to wake him? --- What, was he asleep? --- Yes --- I am sorry I came in at such an improper time; but why did not you admit me at a more proper season? Then, turning to the Marquis, he went on: "Well, child, don't take it amiss; I could not contain myself any longer without seeing you." I am obliged to you for your kindness, returned the Marquis very low and feebly. Why, you seem to be very weak, said the Count. You are not managed properly. If you will be ruled by me, and take some good restoratives, some good old Burgundy, now --- What's that you propose, my dear, said the Countess; he hath not got rid of the fever. --- Nay, returned he, I propose nothing; but this I know --- in short, Marquis, you have been very ill, every body gave you over, and saith I was of that opinion too: you have  
had



Had a terrible shock, indeed, my good friend. Well, I hope now your follies will have an end. I took it much to heart that you was offended with me, you little rebel, you; but still I cannot help loving you. ----

During this discourse, the Countess made all the signs she could, to put a stop to it; but to no purpose. It was at length interrupted by the arrival of the Physician, who, seeing us all round the bed, concluded the patient was grown worse. He found him, in fact, a good deal fluttered; but, being informed of the occasion, thought proper to make us all retire. At this, the Count was displeased, and said the Doctor was an ignorant pretender; offering to fetch two or three Empirics, whom he has taken it into his head to recommend. The Countess, however, begged that the Physician first called in, might proceed in his regular practice: On which her husband withdrew, saying that, as his advice was not to be taken, he would have nothing more to do in the affair.

The Marquis hath been much less composed since this unlucky intrusion. His succeeding paroxysm was more violent than the former. At present he is much better; the  
fit

fit is over; but it hath weakened him to the last degree.

*March 6.*

THANK God, his life is at length out of danger. The fever hath left him; he was but little affected by it last night. The Physician assures us the fit will not return; but I am afraid the poor Marquis is so reduced, that he will be a long while in recovering his former health and strength. He just now call'd for his valet-de-chambre, with whom he desired to be left alone. I knew it was to ask whether Leonora had been informed of his danger. He was told that Martha came every day to enquire after his health. He desired to speak with her the next time she came. I shall know what he says to her. ---

Martha has just been here; the Marquis hath seen her alone; and, as she informs me, gave her the following message for her mistress. "As I cannot write, tell Leonora that I have sufficiently expiated my fault. Tell her it is she alone who calls me back to life, to which, if I return --- I beg of her to write to me, one line, one single word. --- If she would not come to see me, let her at least write to me."

This

This short discourse, it seems, was interrupted by frequent and profound sighs. He appears to me extremely thoughtful ever since. We sat by him above half an hour before he spoke a word. At length he broke silence by asking his sister, if she was not greatly fatigued? She would have persuaded him to the contrary, but he insisted on her taking repose. I feel myself out of danger, says he, and therefore beg of you to leave me to-night. Your care of me in the day time will now be sufficient. She would have still opposed his desire, but he was too pressing; and intreated us both to go home. We shall leave him, therefore, this evening, so that I shall not write to you daily, as I have done for some time past; but will inform you occasionally of every thing that is interesting; and particularly of the progress of his cure. Adieu, Madam; the acknowledgments of the amiable Countess give me so much confusion, that I must intreat you to say nothing of yours.

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## LETTER LIV.

*From M. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Mar. 8.*

**T**HE Marquis is now, Madam, absolutely out of danger. His fever has left him these three days, and the Physicians pronounce him to be in the most promising state. His heart, however, is by no means cured. The Countess spends whole days with him. In the mean time, he appears to me very thoughtful, sorrowful, and reserved. I am apprehensive his mind is agitated by some terrible conflict; but I tremble to think I have guessed the cause. I observe him, every now and then, look steadfastly at his sister; then sigh and turn his eyes, abashed, on the ground. At other times, he sits silent, while his reflections seem to work strongly on his passions; the motion of his lips betraying his earnest converse with himself. It is with difficulty we can awaken him from these profound reveries. He received a billet from Leonora this morning, which he read several times over, and put under his pillow. He hath since seemed less sorrowful, but more absent than before. You need be under no farther apprehensions.

Madam,

## L E T T E R LV. 129

Madam, on account of his health ; for my part, I am fully assured of his recovery. At the same time, the services I have had the happiness to render him in his illness, appear to have made him a sincere friend to me, as they have strengthened my attachment to him.

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## L E T T E R LV.

*From Leonora to the Marquis.*

*Paris, Mar. 8.*

**W**HAT a trial, my dear Marquis, of my love ! No. I could never have survived you. I have almost reproached myself for the most virtuous resolutions. But is it possible for virtue and honour to cause remorse ? How have I trembled for your life ! But Heaven has been pleased to restore it, and may every future hour of it be fortunate ! You cannot be insensible of the impropriety of my coming to see you. Do not, therefore, desire it. Adieu, my dear Roselle. If you but live and are happy, I cannot be altogether miserable.



LETTER LVI.

From the Marquis to Leonora.

Paris, March 11.

I HAVE been so weak for these three days past, that I have not been able to answer your letter. Believe me, my dear and lovely friend, I seize the first moment in which I am able to hold my pen, to thank you. The terrible prospect of death hath set every object before me in its true light. Under those dreadful circumstances my prejudices disappeared, my vanity was annihilated. I will subject your virtue to no farther trials. I ardently wish to see you; but decorum, it is true, requires you should not come to me. Adieu! dear idol of my soul! thou better half of myself! Adieu. I am still so weak that I dare not indulge myself longer in the pleasure of writing to you.

LETTER LVII.

From Mr. de Ferval to Madam de Nanton.

Paris, Mar. 15.

YOUR patient, Madam, hath not kept his bed for four days past: but continues daily

daily to gather strength. Mr. Valville just now sent up his name; the Marquis desired I would prevent his coming up: on which I went down, and told him the Marquis was not yet well enough to see any body. He did not seem to believe me, but received this refusal with a smile. I cannot be angry, said he, with a man that is frantic: I see his brain is actually turned! What monstrous extravagance! Pray, continued he, is the Marquis still in love with that creature? Indeed, Sir, I replied, I am not the confident of his amours, but I am afraid his passion is not abated; which gives me great uneasiness. It is scandalous, said he, that such a whim should last so long: I absolutely blush for his folly. Adieu, Sir, I shall wait till this idle love-fit is over, and then I shall see him. In the mean time I shall not intrude on him; indeed a sick bed-chamber is a kind of purgatory to me. As he is out of danger, I am satisfied. --- I am apt to think, Madam, that this Mr. Valville hath not a very tender heart.

At my return up stairs, I found the Countess alone with her brother; who appeared much moved, and begged I would excuse him for a little while, as he had some business

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ness of importance to communicate to his sister. I went out. What he was going to say to her, I know not; but I am almost afraid to guess. You will certainly know it from Madam de St. Sever.

L E T T E R LVIII.

*From Madam de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, Mar. 17.*

**A**LAS! my compassionate friend, what a scene have I got to describe! But I know not if I have the power; my spirits have been quite exhausted; and I am, even at present, in that strong agitation which usually succeeds such violent efforts of the mind. I will endeavour, nevertheless, to recover myself. --- I ought indeed to fortify myself strongly against that tenderness and compassion which I feel for my unhappy brother.

Mr. de Ferval having left the Marquis and me together, as he informed you; my brother seemed much pleased; and I saw by the embarrassment of his looks, that he had something particular to communicate. He was some time before he ventured to break silence; but the proofs of my affection and tenderness

gave him confidence at length to lay open his heart. My dear, my generous sister, said he, throwing his arms about my neck, will, I am certain, condescend to hear what I have to say; at least I hope, nay, I entreat it. To this I replied, by returning his affectionate embrace. I have recovered my health, continued he; but the cause of my malady is not removed; it is rooted in my heart. I am in love. That confession alone may serve to account for all my past behaviour to you. I concealed it from you, because I knew the discovery would only serve to afflict you; and I was in hopes of getting the better of my passion. But since my unhappy love hath brought me to the brink of the grave, and is perhaps the only means to preserve my life, it is expedient for me to declare the excess of my passion, in order to engage your pity. It is needless to speak of what I have suffered. You may judge of this, my dear sister, by the circumstances in which you have seen me, and from which your generous care hath delivered me. Compleat the work you have begun, permit me to be no longer unhappy, and let me still live for you. For me, Brother! I would readily give the half of my life to contribute to the happiness



of yours. Is the person you love deserving of you? — Yes, sister, she is honest and virtuous. Probity and virtue are the only distinction in minds. Having such sentiments, they are all upon an equality, and are naturally united. Whether upon the stage or upon the throne, they merit equal homage and respect. The humiliating situation to which fortune hath condemned Leonora — Leonora! O Brother! — Alas! sister, her profession is her misfortune, not her fault.

Prepossessed as I was of the affair, I could not forbear exclaiming at the mention of Leonora. That I might not offend my brother, however, I composed myself as well as I could, and told him very coolly, that her choice alone of such a profession, sufficiently condemned her. How can a woman be thought virtuous, said I, who voluntarily exposes her name to public shame? Virtue secludes itself within the precincts of honour, and we see, that even when women have banished virtue from their hearts, they endeavour to preserve the appearance of it. Nothing but vice can willingly embrace infamy. — Hold, sister, are you acquainted with the circumstances that first reduced her to embrace



# LETTER LVIII. 135

embrace this way of life? We ought not to be too hasty to condemn the unfortunate: Their very faults are often nothing more than additional involuntary misfortune. Indigence leads them to the first asylum that presents itself; so that, if they should cherish the little virtue they have left, when they perceive what they have suffered in the public opinion, do they not merit all our indulgence and compassion? Let us lament, let us pity them, my dear sister, before we condemn them. --- I am not insensible, brother, that candour is due to the unfortunate; but let not your sensibility deceive you. Can you imagine that if your Leonora had been truly virtuous, she could have found no resource but in the Opera? Virtue will embrace indigence to avoid shame; and hath never recourse to shame to avoid indigence. Leonora might easily support herself by needle-work, in service, or by the charity of well-disposed minds. A state of servitude, chosen in necessity, had rendered her indigence at least respectable; whereas by presenting the stage, her heart resigned itself at once to temptation and vice. Is it possible for such unhappy women to live merely on their talents as players, without trafficking

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with their charms? Many of them have no other merit than their beauty, and their views of fortune are solely founded on the inordinate passions they inspire. But, supposing their intentions ever so pure, is it possible for those who are continually subjected to the most seductive temptations to vice, to remain attached to virtue, which presents to their view nothing but austerity and mortification? Should there be any one capable of so much fortitude, her virtue itself would soon compel her to fly from the dangers with which she would be surrounded.

What! said my brother, with the impatient air of a man who could contain himself no longer, is it impossible then for an Opera-singer to be virtuous? The Town, Madam, the Town, who are wicked and unjust, who calumniate these women even before their conduct hath debased them; it is the Town --- Nay, brother, said I, let us not grow warm; that is not the way to reason: we shall soon forget that we are brother and sister, and shall wander from the point. Permit me, then, to tell you, that in general, those actresses who pass for virtuous, are perhaps only the most decent; that if there be among them some who are entitled to a  
kind

# LETTER LVIII. 137

kind of respect, they are such whose natural genius and talents have prompted them to distinguish themselves, and have thereby obtained, with the applause of the public, the flattering distinction which is annexed to extraordinary success. But it appears to me, (I hope without offence to you, brother,) that Leonora cannot be ranked either among those actresses we admire, or those to whose personal character is paid the least regard. --- What is the voice or opinion of the Town to me, if I know them to be false and unjust? Would you give up an innocent creature to the fury of a prejudiced populace, excited by misrepresentation and calumny? --- No, I agree with you, brother, that we ought to put little confidence in the prejudices of the public; but we ought to put still less in our own passions. You are young, ingenuous, and honest. These artful women, used to put on all appearances, and play various parts, well know how easily Hypocrisy can impose on simplicity, and how far the mask of virtue may seduce such an heart as yours. There are many persons much more experienced and clear-sighted than you, that have had the misfortune to fall into their fatal snares. All this I know,

said

said he; but I have the most undoubted proof of the virtue of Leonora. I have found her so frank, so noble, so disinterested! She wants only a title and estate, to render her one of the most respectable of women. Who can blame me for rewarding her virtue? Those only who are without virtue themselves. I will repair the wrongs which fortune hath done to her merit; I will raise her to the condition to which she ought to have been born; and you will see, that the very public who calumniated Leonora, will have a proper respect for the Marchioness de Roselle.

Here he stopped, and gave a deep sigh like a man who had just got rid of something that lay heavy at his heart. I observed him steadfastly, and perceived he was for some time wholly taken up with this pleasure. I saw that while he was in this agitation, he would neither hear, nor understand any thing I might say, to oppose his design. He had introduced it, by a preliminary apology, the validity of which it was perhaps needless to dispute, as I could have well admitted it without weakening those powerful arguments I had to produce against such a design itself. But the force of truth, and my indignation



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at the circumstances, led me on. After a pretty long silence, the Marquis, seeming to recover his attention, looked at me as if he waited for my answer. I had one ready for him.

Have you, said I, temper enough to attend, and fortitude enough to hear me? I hope I have, replied he, I ought and will endeavour it; but, sister, continued he with a smile, prepossession hath its zeal, its infatuation, as well as passion.—As it is your cause, brother, I am to plead, some allowance should be made for the zeal of a sister; my chief prepossession in this case is in behalf of you; it is one of the prepossessions of nature; it is superior to all others, and attached only to my own duty and your real interest. I will even be as tender as possible of the object of your passion. Ah! would to heaven! my dear brother! Would to heaven! that woman was such as you imagine! I would appeal to herself, and trust your honour in her hands. If she be really virtuous, she will reinspire you with those sentiments of delicacy and decorum, which a blind passion only hath made you forget. If she hath any principle of honour herself, I she will dread the thought of debasing you.



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to elevate herself. If she loves you, she will never consent to expose you to the disgust, chagrin, and repentance, which must ensue on taking so mortifying a step. If she be prudent, she will avoid an elevation, which she will be sensible of only by the most humiliating circumstances and reflections.

Do not flatter yourself, brother, that your name is sufficiently illustrious to efface the ignominy, attendant on that of Leonora, without being itself tarnished by the union. You will be more debased by her name than she will be honoured by yours; and tho' the publick should pay some respect to the Marchioness de Roselle, do you think it will spare you? that publick, which you have respected so little? that publick, which knows that your birth imposes on you the duty of behaving with decorum and dignity? that publick, which is the jealous avenger of honour, of which it is both the lawgiver and judge, sensible that it should reside, in the breasts of persons of your rank, in its utmost purity and majesty; and ready to punish with obloquy all those who venture to violate its sacred laws? You may, doubtless, find your conduct approved of, by some vain  
and

and contemptible individuals, who pique themselves on singularity, and are ever opposing the most respectable of public opinions, in order to be excused from observing that decency and decorum which they necessarily impose; but such persons are themselves so base and worthless, that their very suffrage is disgraceful. You may find some among these mean enough to flatter you, from motives of interest; and others whimsical and capricious enough to bestow disinterested approbation on the follies of others. But put the case home to them; ask them seriously if they would themselves act in the same manner, or approve of a similar conduct in their children or brothers, and you will find them change their tone. The utmost consolation you are to expect, is the pity of susceptible and indulgent minds; that compassion which they naturally feel for the weak and the unhappy.

He seemed to listen to what I said with looks of profound attention; when, raising his head as I stopped, he answered, that he did not seek either his justification or happiness in the opinion of others; but in the testimony of a good conscience, his love, his *Leonora* --- and in a sense of true honour  
and

and virtue, Madam, added he, with an air of fierceness and resolution. Virtue! said I, (perceiving myself warmed and my soul rising within me,) honour! conscience! brother. Do you expect consolation and repose in these? They will reproach you every day of your life for your unworthy alliance. They will daily represent to your reflection that violation of decorum, justice, reason, and nature, which will be the consequence of such an hateful sacrifice of your duty. And, indeed, what right have you as a citizen, adorned with prerogatives and honours; what right, I say, have you to pervert the order of society, which, in distinguishing the stations of individuals for the good of the state, hath in effect engaged that such as she places in an honourable rank should be neither so mean nor ungrateful as to disturb the public harmony by their own debasement? The order of society hath annexed duties and obligations to rank and distinction; and you would hardly violate its laws, because those laws, consonant with religion and virtue, have chosen to trust the heart with their observance, and have no other avengers than public disgrace and contempt. By what authority do you, who by birth and

rank

rank are more particularly entrusted with that noble deposit, the preservation of public order, disgrace your nation, in depriving it, as far as lies in your power, of that respectable order and decorum of manners which have been transmitted to you from your ancestors? Why do not you cease to be a member of that society, against whose good order you are a declared enemy: not only by breaking through it in your own person, but by setting a bad example to others. The contagion of this example may spread itself through a multitude of inconsiderate youth, seduced by those wretched women, who will become more enterprising from Leonora's success? How will you answer it to your country, that may justly reprobach you, as an unworthy and unnatural child, flying in the face of an indulgent parent? What answer can you make, when you are reprobached for diffusing a meanness of spirit among others of the same rank, by your defection from that exalted sense of dignity, which you are bound to cherish? What reply will you make to the complaints of those desolated or divided families, who may justly accuse you of having led the dishonourable way to their destruction? How will



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will you justify yourself even to your own family, when they ask you, wherefore you have tarnished their name and honours by such debasement? That name is not yours, unless it was yours alone; and the dishonour you cast upon it will be injurious to all those who bear it. They will have the daily mortification of being confounded with you and your offspring; and will thus all share the punishment of your crime. Our family, formed to avenge every insult that should be offered it, hath not been hitherto dishonoured; and shall it be said that you, my brother, was born to render it conspicuously infamous, both in yourself and in your children? Shall the Marquis of Roselle give his children such a mother as Leonora? The most inveterate enemy of our house could not wish to give them any other. But you owe to your children that purity of blood, which you, Sir, have derived from those to whom you are indebted for a being. Depend on it, that very blood will cry out against you, if you mix it with such as is vile and corrupted. --- You sigh, at this reflection; and must doubtless shudder at the prospect of those unhappy children; unhappy in their birth, and ever bearing about the indelible



delible marks of proſcription, as the offspring of that diſorder which is deſtructive of the very being of ſociety. They cannot fail of being conſtantly mortified with a ſenſe of their own indignity. They will find the career to honours and diſtinctions, which lies open to other families, ſhut up againſt them and their children. They will have daily cauſe to lament their birth; and to bluſh at being the offspring of ſuch a mother. The public will call them, by way of opprobrium, the children of Leonora. They will tranſmit the like diſhonour to poſterity; the mark of their diſgrace being already legibly ſtamped on the unformed features of their grand-children: And can you reflect upon this, and not prefer death to ſuch a marriage; to the miſery of being a father on ſuch terms?

Will your paſſion, your Leonora, be ſufficient to ensure your happineſs? Leonora herſelf, brother, can never be happy. At preſent ſhe is every thing with you, becauſe ſhe is not in your poſſeſſion, and you are inſatuated by the deſire of gratifying your paſſion. But were ſhe once yours, you would by degrees recover from your preſent intoxication, and daily perceive more and more wanting to your happineſs. You would per-

ceive your former sentiments of honour revive; you would insensibly be awakened by the conscientious voice of nature and probity, demanding a restoration of their violated prerogatives. Love alone is by no means the whole of our obligations, nor can alone constitute our happiness. That passion is a mere illusion, a violent and transitory state of mind. Its ebullitions subside with age; the charms which now are so very seductive, will decay; and the time will come, in which you will condemn yourself more severely than you will be condemned by others, and that by so much the more, as your repentance and remorse will irritate you against yourself. You will then blush for your indiscreet passion, you will mourn for a misfortune that will be irreparable; and will be glad to give up the latter part of your life to recall the former.

On what grounds do you flatter yourself that you shall continue always in love, beloved, and happy? Who hath assured you of this? Is it Leonora? Or is it your own heart? Many fond attachments, alas! have ended in despair, with such slight securities!

All this time the Marquis stood silent and motionless; conceiving that I had staggered  
his

his resolution, therefore, I proceeded thus. I suppose (as you see) that Leonora hath all the good qualities she affects; that she sincerely entertains for you all that love and regard to which she doubtless pretends; that the illusions of the earlier part of life are never to be dissipated; that she will conduct herself like a woman born in your own rank, and educated among your own family; that she will govern your house with equal dignity and prudence; that she may prove both a faithful wife and tender mother; that she may inculcate worthy principles and delicate sentiments in the minds of your children; that she may serve them as an example, and give them an education she hath not received: I suppose that — And I suppose (cried the Marquis, interrupting me with great vehemence) that a sister, who loves her brother, should pity his errors, and not insult him; I suppose farther, the Marquis de Roselle is a better judge of what is necessary to his happiness than the Countess de St. Sever; and that, being free and independent, he is master to dispose of himself, as he shall think proper, in spite of those who may oppose him. Having said this, he hastily turned away, and was going to leave the room. I

ran after him to stop his going; my dear brother, said I ---- I have no sister, replied he, making an effort to disengage himself from me; which he did. Greatly agitated, "Spirit of my Father," cried I, "My dear Mother! assist me in this terrible conflict!" At the mention of these sacred names, he trembled and stopt; permitting me to lead him back to a sofa. Here I stood up before him, while he leaned back, with his eyes shut, and in the most affecting emotions. Hitherto the warmth of my zeal had supported my spirits, and elevated me above myself; I was insensible and severe; not thinking how much he suffered by my discourse, but attending only to the effect it had on the resolution, he had hinted. It was not then my business to pity him, but to alarm, and, if possible, to work a change on his heart. I thundered out my remonstrances, and expressed the indignation I felt, without mercy. But now tenderness and sensibility retook possession of my heart. I began to be again alarmed for the health of this unhappy brother, and, under this apprehension, burst into a flood of tears; bathing one of his hands, which I tremblingly pressed in mine. On this he opened his eyes, and  
gave



ave me a look that tenderly reproached me for forgetting his infirm situation, and strongly solicited my compassion. Mixing his tears with mine, O, sister! sister! said he. Alas, my brother! said I, forgive my cruelty; I am yet your sister. Yes, you are, replied he, in a faltering voice; forgive me, and I am still your brother. We recovered our spirits by degrees, and I thought I perceived a ray of serenity on his countenance; when, addressing me in a pathetic manner, and moving tone of voice, capable of affecting the most insensible heart, My dear sister, said he, I am afraid I have said something to you which I ought not; if it be so, continued he, putting on a smile both of affection and tenderness, our tears have effaced its remembrance. You have been witness of the excess of my passion for ---- (here he paused, forbearing to mention the name of Leonora.) You are sufficiently apprized of my design; you have opposed it as became you; but you argue with a man in love, who cannot be persuaded. I made no answer to your remonstrances; but I felt, notwithstanding, that my heart had something to say. I could not bring it out, indeed; it probably would not have been satisfactory to you; tho' it ap-  
pears



pers to me unanswerable. Pardon me, my dear sister, but I cannot change my resolution; all that I can do for you is, not to put my design into execution so soon as I intended. I shall think upon every thing you have said to me; and give you my word of honour, that I shall take no step in this affair, without giving you previous information. Are you satisfied with this? I think it is gaining a good deal upon me. You, sister, who are my friend, and wish my happiness, should in your turn, do something for your brother. Be indulgent enough to put yourself in my place; conceive, if possible, the distress of my situation, and perhaps, added he, in a plaintive tone, you will consent to my happiness.

The tears stood in his eyes when he had done speaking; and I replied to what he had said in the most affectionate manner: I thanked him for the promise he had made me; and we tenderly embraced each other. The Count de St. Sever, entering soon after, put an end to this affecting conversation.

What, my dear friend, have I not to fear? What have I to hope? It is something that we have gained time: but he is so taken, so fascinated with this creature, that all is lost,  
unless

unless we find means either to undeceive him with regard to her pretended virtue, or take more rigorous measures.---- But these would be dreadful ; as they would certainly be fatal to his health. To lose his honour, or his life ! What an alternative ! O, support me ! Give me, at least, some consolation by your advice. My regard for him is such, that, if he should take the opportunity when my heart is entirely devoted to friendship, I feel I shall not be able to refuse my consent. How ardently do I wish, that poverty and obscurity of birth were all the objections to be made to the object of his passion ! I would go, find her, and myself give her hand to my brother. I respect, indeed, the circumstance of birth, because it is an additional motive to virtue ; but in fact it is only the gift of chance, often useless to our happiness ; and I am far from despising those who have not this advantage. Nothing is mean in my eyes, but vice. A woman of low birth might well bear the name of my brother ; were she otherwise respectable by her virtue, I should think her sufficiently honoured by the name of her husband, and would make her my friend and companion. My familiarity with her would be a proof of her merit ;

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and when the public should see her respected and supported by an honourable family, from which her birth seemed to have excluded her, they would not dare to entertain a disrespect for her, nor would they long censure her brother. But an infamous profession! A scandalous life! No, my dear Countess, I should be the basest of women if I should consent to such an union. Advise, console, assist me; for, indeed, I stand in need of advice, consolation, and assistance.

L E T T E R LIX.

*From Madam de Narton to Madam de St. Sever.*

*Varennnes, Mar. 20.*

**W**HAT advice, what counsel can I give my friend, which her own sensibility and discretion will not readily suggest? Your own heart, my dear Countess, will be, as it hitherto hath been, your best guide and director. But I see that your remonstrances, however rational and just, will but slightly affect the resolution of your unhappy brother; whose passion hath blinded his understanding. The tenderness you displayed towards him; that pathetic stroke, which drew tears from

from my eyes in the perusal of your letter; your calling to his remembrance the venerable idea of his dead parents; this alone prevailed on him to hear you, and obtained his promise of delaying his intended marriage.

Persevere, my dear friend, in giving him the strongest proofs of your love and friendship; let him see that you are ready to second, nay, to anticipate, his wishes, in regard to what is just, reasonable, and decent; but let him, at the same time, perceive, through your tenderest caresses, an unalterable firmness of resolution to oppose what is not so. Avoid, as much as possible, every thing that may turn the conversation on this fatal subject. Let him read in your looks, in your whole countenance, that you feel a kind of horror at hearing the very name of Leonora. You cannot say more to him than you have already said. To repeat it, will serve only to weaken the force of its impression on his mind; and your altercations may not always end so tenderly as the last. If once he should harbour resentment, all is lost. Adieu, my dear friend, you are sensible there is no person in the world, who partakes of your afflictions so much as myself.

LETTER LX.

*From the Countess de Saint-Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, March 25.*

I Write to you, my dear friend, amidst the utmost uneasiness and distress. Mr. de St. Sever hath entirely undone us. He went yesterday, without consulting me, or saying any thing of his intention, to the house of Leonora; whom he treated with great severity, ending his menaces with that of having her confined. In the evening, he told me of this rash adventure; and, seeing I was greatly displeased with so unadvised and precipitate a step, he grew angry; telling me that he had done it only for my sake, to put an end to my uneasiness; for that he could not bear to see me under such constant fears and apprehensions, and that the only way to cure my brother of his extravagant passion was to remove the object of it. The mischief being done, my dear, it was useless to remonstrate; I therefore said little; but I foresaw what hath since happened. My brother hath left us --- Good God! what a rage! I still tremble at the thoughts of it. Having heard from that creature, of my husband's



husband's menaces, he flew into the most violent passion ; and, had I not been present, might have proceeded to the greatest extremities. Mr. de St. Sever was determined to tell him all he thought and knew of Leonora ; but my brother returned him only a look of indignation ; till he pushed the matter so far, as to ask him ironically, if he was not making the proper preparations for his marriage ? At this, the Marquis interrupted his railing, and told him, in the greatest fury, that he had no measures to keep with us any longer ; that his resolution was taken ; that he would set Leonora above our insults, by making her his wife ; the preparations, added he, shall not be tedious ; nor will I be accountable for my conduct to any but myself. The tears which stood in my eyes, and now burst forth in abundance, appeared greatly to affect him ; while looking at me with great emotion he advanced a step or two towards me ; but, stopping short and turning suddenly about, he flung out of the room, leaving me in the greatest distress and affliction. O, my dear friend, how shall I be able to support such repeated misfortunes !

LETTER LXI.

*From the Marquis de Roselle to the Countess de Saint-Sever.*

*Paris, March 27.*

I Cannot bear the reflection, my dear sister, of giving you so much disquietude. I know your heart, and am sensible you could not give into the insolent project of your husband. The effect of your tears may convince you that you are dear to me. I would have given my blood to have stopped them, and cannot forgive myself for causing them to flow. Had the violence of my temper permitted me to reflect, you should not have been witness of so mortifying a scene. I love you, my dear sister, and am sensible both of the obligations I owe you, and of what you have a right to expect of me. When the heart speaks, duty may be silent. But wherefore should Mr. de St. Sever abuse that tenderness which I have for you, and the ascendant which he knows you have over me? By what right? By what authority, doth he take upon him thus to insult me? Think not, dear sister, that I suffer less than you; my greatest affliction is that I am forced

## LETTER LXI. 157

to renounce the pleasure of seeing you. My affectionate friend will compassionate her unhappy brother; but let her not condemn an invincible passion. Believe me, the object of it is really virtuous. Let me still possess a place in your affections; forgive those transports which I detest, and ought to have concealed from you; and entertain not the sentiments of your husband. Permit me to renew the assurances of my tenderest friendship.

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## LETTER LXII.

*From Madam de St. Sever to the Marquis.*

*Paris, March 27.*

**R**ENOUNCE the sight of me! O, my brother! Is it possible? Alas, I shall never survive your putting such a resolve in execution. No. You must not, will not, do it. Let your affection for me, and in me for those dear parents we have lost, excite in you all those tender sentiments you feel for both. Is it impossible for you to forgive my husband his zeal to serve you? This may be too impetuous and mistaken, but his goodwill is his only crime. He is sensible, my dear brother, that he hath no right, no authority

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thority over you, but those of affection. He desires no other; nor interests himself in your affairs, in any other light, than as a friend and brother. I long most ardently to see you; and, if I did not fear to be importunate, would fly to you, with my husband; our regret, our tears, our affection should efface the remembrance of what is past, and confirm anew the sincerity of our love and friendship. --- Let me entreat of you, then, my dear brother, not to deprive us of your company.

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## L E T T E R LXIII.

*From the Marquis to Madam de St. Sever.*

*Paris, March 28.*

**I**T is impossible, my dear sister, to withstand your affectionate sollicitation; but it is equally impossible for me to consent to see your husband. He will probably be as willing also to avoid me. If you would be alone this evening ---- promise me this, and I will be with you by seven o'clock. I shall not be able to stay above a minute; but it will be sufficient that I shall have seen you, and renewed the assurances of eternal friendship.

L E T.



## LETTER LXIV.

*From the Countess to Madam de Narton.**Paris, March 29.*

**A**LAS! my dear, we have now no resource! I had not totally lost the friendship of my brother, when, his heart relenting, he consented to re-visit me, on condition that my husband should not be present at our interview. With much difficulty I obtained, or, at least thought I had obtained, the favour of Mr. de St. Sever's absence. He promised to leave me alone, and I gave my brother the like assurance. The Count actually went out; soon after which my brother arrived, and returned my salutations with an air of the tenderest affection. After the first effusions of our hearts, he insisted on my promise not to confine Leonora, or use any violence towards her; as in such a case, he should think himself disengaged from the promise he had made me, not to hasten his marriage. I was going to reply, when Mr. de St. Sever unexpectedly entered the room; with a look of gaiety mixed with severity. My surprize could not persuade my brother that I had not combined with my husband to deceive him. One look, which he gave me



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as he rose up to go out, was sufficient to convince me what passed in his mind. Mr. de St. Sever stopped him, and told him, he was extremely astonished that he should desire him on any occasion to go out of his own house; that he was not accustomed to such kind of behaviour; that what he had been induced to say to him, was always for his good; that he would never cease to put him in mind of the ruin he was going to plunge himself into; that his honour obliged him to endeavour to stop the progress of a destructive passion; that he would, at all hazards, prevent the dishonour of his family, nor suffer his brother-in-law to conclude so abominable a marriage: I will certainly shut up that creature, said he, and, if it be necessary, prevent even your seeing her. Your sister hath spoiled you, my good friend; but depend on it I will not. All this was uttered with so much volubility, that it was impossible to interrupt his harangue, had my brother even deigned to reply. This, however, he did not; but, with a calm and disdainful air, turning about to me, said, Are these your promises, Madam? Adieu. --- I endeavoured to stop him, but he threw me from him with indignation, and left the room without hearing what

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what I had to say. It is now all over, and I shall certainly see him no more; nay, his detestable union with that creature will probably take place immediately. I will not tire you with melancholy reflections; but how much am I to be pitied! We have now no other means than those of violence; unhappy, weak resource! For is not my brother his own master? If his resolution be actually fixed, we can only prevent his doing that immediately, which he will certainly do sometime hereafter. Add to this, that I know not what right we have to deprive any member of society of his liberty? Am I more prudent or powerful than the laws? I have sent for Mr. de Ferval, to inform him of what has happened. I have no hopes but in him; and even in him, alas! how weak are my present hopes! I was never so discouraged and dejected. Adieu.

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## LETTER LXV.

*From Mr. de Ferval to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, April 3.*

OUR fears, Madam, have never been so great, nor so well-founded as at present. The Marquis conceives himself entirely dis-

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engaged from the promise he made the Countess his sister. The apprehensions he was under of Leonora's confinement, and perhaps her own fears of such an event, have not only induced him to conceal her, in the house of some confidant; but to hasten his marriage. I am informed of the Notary, who is to sign the contract this very evening. Having a watchful eye on his conduct, I find every thing is ready. —

I have this moment received the packet I expected, containing Leonora's letters. Adieu, Madam; I fly to this unhappy, deluded youth, in hopes of timely snatching from his eyes that fatal bandage which now covers them.

LETTER LXVI.

*From the Marquis de Roselle to Madam de St. Sever.*

*Paris, April 4, one o'clock in the Morning.*

**C**AN you deign, Madam, to honour me with the name of brother, the vilest, the most abandoned of men? One who hath imbrued his hands in the blood of his friend — of your friend, the excellent Ferval.

But

## L E T T E R LXVII. 163

But my death only can expiate so detestable a crime. The surgeons, indeed, tell me, his wound is not mortal. I am at present at his own apartments with him. Haste, my dear sister, to compose my agitated mind, and to preserve a friend who hath sacrificed all concerns for his own life, to the preservation of mine. Good Heaven! could nothing less than the blood of such a friend wash off the horrid stains of my execrable passion? not less detestable now than the object which inspired it; tho' in detesting her I must abhor myself.

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## L E T T E R LXVII.

*From the Countess de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, April 4.*

**O**H! my dear friend! to what a crisis have affairs been brought! How shall I inform you; how inform Madam de Ferval, that her deserving son hath narrowly escaped falling a victim to the mistaken fury of my unhappy brother? But, thanks to Heaven! Providence hath saved the life of our amiable friend, our generous benefactor; who is now out of danger. It is proper I should

M 2

give



give you this assurance before I begin the shocking relation. I ought to acquaint you also, for the honour, and in justification, of the unfortunate Marquis, that it is from him I have received information of those mortifying circumstances I am about to relate. Ferval would have concealed them from me, and indeed knows nothing of my brother's imparting them to me.

About eight o'clock last night, Mr. de Ferval went to the Marquis's house; and, notwithstanding the domestics had strict orders to admit nobody, went in; he found my brother, Leonora, and two other persons, with a Notary preparing a contract of marriage for immediate signature. The Marquis immediately took fire at the indiscreet intrusion, as he called it, of our friend; and was in a rage when he found his intention was to prevent the signing of the contract. By what authority, Sir, said he, in a menacing tone, have you entered here, contrary to my orders? and what right have you to controul my actions? Begone, Sir, immediately, or I beg, Marquis, said Ferval, only one quarter of an hour. Shall we withdraw into another apartment? When our short conversation is ended, you will be at liberty to act



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as you please. ---- Yes, yes, returned my brother, glowing with rage, we will withdraw. I must have satisfaction for this insolent proceeding. I am very ready to give it you, Sir, answered Ferval, in a mild and gentle tone; please to peruse the letters contained in this packet. ---- No, Sir, I will read nothing, I will hear nothing, till I have had satisfaction. Follow me. At this, Leonora was very uneasy, and would have detained him. Give me the packet, Sir, said she to Ferval; if it be so important for the Marquis to read it, I will prevail on him; you may trust it safely in my hands: pray, Sir, retire: And you, Sir, too, if you please, said she to the Notary. We will wait the issue of this eclaireissement, which Mr. de Ferval conceives to be so necessary, and could not be delayed to another opportunity. Ferval refused to trust her with the packet; on which the Marquis snatched it out of his hands, and threw it into the fire. Ferval was quick enough to take it out again unburnt: the Notary would have retired, but the Marquis prevented him, and took Ferval into the garden; where my brother clapping his hand to his sword, bid him defend himself. Ferval was of course obliged to draw;

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he put by several passes made at him by the Marquis, but at length received a thrust on the breast. He fell, and the blood, which flowed in great abundance, soon extinguished my brother's fury: he endeavoured to raise up his friend, and called in assistance. But what was his astonishment when he perceived that the sword of Ferval, which laid upon the ground, had several inches of it broken off at the point. What a weapon is this? Why did you not acquaint me of this circumstance? — I foresaw your violence, answered Ferval in a feeble tone of voice, and took this precaution, my dear Roselle, to prevent the misfortune of taking your life. My design was not to offend, much less to hurt you; I came only to prevent, if possible, your shame and ruin. It is not yet too late; the sincerity of my friendship, which now is past dispute, that blood which you have shed, and the life I have sacrificed to you, demand at least that you will peruse the contents of this packet. Alas! my dear friend, replied my brother, I can at present think of nothing but your safety. A surgeon now arriving, he dressed the wound, and the patient was conveyed to my brother's own apartment. The situation of the Marquis was

## L E T T E R LXVII. 167

was at this instant as terrible as that of his friend, whose wound was not mortal; his weakness arising only from his loss of blood. The surgeon, indeed, assured him, that he would be well again in a week. After the first agitation of spirits which this accident occasioned was over, Ferval insisted again that the Marquis should open and read the packet. It contained the letters of Leonora to Juliet, a creature of the same stamp, in which the former had disclosed to the latter, the design and circumstances of her vile intrigue. I have here sent you copies of them. Thunder-struck at the perusal of these infamous billets, my brother threw them down with horror on the table; taking large strides across the room, with rage and fury sparkling in his eyes. The sight of his friend, who lay on the bed, and offered him his hand, made him recollect himself. What shame! cried he, what mortification is this! — He sat down immediately to write to me; begging I would come to him. On the receipt of his note I did so; and found him in this distressful situation. Ferval would have concealed his own distress from my knowledge. No, no, my friend, said the Marquis, let me at least expiate my fault, by

M 4

confessing

confessing the whole to my sister. Ferval  
 again interrupted him, when the surgeon  
 gave us to understand, that our conversation  
 might too much affect the patient. We with-  
 drew, therefore, to another apartment, where  
 my brother, with many interruptions of sighs  
 and tears, gave me an imperfect relation of  
 the affair. Returning into Ferval's apart-  
 ment, he gave me the letters, which I read,  
 and returned them in silence. Well, sister,  
 said he, am I sufficiently mortified? Are you  
 fully avenged? I rose up and embraced him,  
 mingling tears with his; but spoke not a  
 word. After about a quarter of an hour  
 thus passed away in the silent agitations of  
 alternate resentment and tenderness, the Mar-  
 quis rose up, and cried out with a resolute  
 and determined air, My dear Ferval, it is a  
 piece of justice which I owe to your friend-  
 ship, to my sister's love, and even to myself,  
 to take ample vengeance on this infamous  
 woman. I will wash off my sword, with her  
 blood, the stains it hath received from yours. A  
 Nay, hold, said Ferval, she is by no means  
 worthy of your resentment. Endeavour, my  
 friend, to forget this unhappy amour; this  
 is the only vengeance you ought to take of so  
 base a creature. Reflect, that any signal  
 mark



# LETTER LXVII. 169

mark of your anger, will only cast dishonour on yourself. On my part, I pressed him in my arms, and conjured him not to leave us: when, after many struggles with himself, he determined to write a note to her; a copy of which also I have inclosed with the other letters. On the receipt of this note, the wretched woman left the house immediately, giving herself an air of insolence before the servants, and went home. We left Fervah about six o' clock in the morning, the Marquis going home with me. Being then a little more tranquil, he began and related a new the circumstances of this cruel adventure. I staid with him till eight, when I went to Mr. St. Sever, whom I advised of the affair, so that I doubt not the Marquis will have reason to be satisfied with his future behaviour. At present my brother is retired to rest. Having just sent to Ferval, I find he is also as well as can be expected; we shall go and see him again in two hours. Adieu, my dear friend, what terrible shocks are these! and how distressful must they prove to Madam de Ferval. Thank Heaven, however, which conducts every thing for the best, she hath nothing to fear on the part of her son.

LET-



## L E T T E R LXVIII.

*From Leonora to Juliet.*

**T**RULY, Juliet, I pity you sincerely :  
 Why would you go thus to confine  
 yourself in a gloomy castle ? It is burying  
 yourself alive ; it is as bad as the life of a  
 modest woman ; nay, it is still worse. Your  
 tyrant, indeed, is rich : now is the time there-  
 fore to enrich yourself ; which is all I can  
 say to the matter. Bizac is gone to spend  
 some time in the canton you live in. If you  
 are permitted to see him now and then, I shall  
 think your situation less deplorable. As to  
 myself, my dear Juliet, I have got a new  
 lover ; the Marquis of Roselle, an officer in  
 the guards. He is not more than twenty  
 years of age, is a fine figure, and has a con-  
 siderable fortune. I became first acquainted  
 with him, by means of one Mr. de Valville,  
 whom you may possibly remember ; he is a  
 fine subject, raw, unexperienced, and roman-  
 tic. We have now been acquainted about a  
 month ; during which time he hath made me  
 several magnificent presents, and hath pressed  
 for nothing in return. He will attain his  
 happiness, he says, by degrees. I take great  
 pains,

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pains, you may be sure, to cherish this very respectful passion; and assure you that I play my part to the life, with dignity, sentiment, delicacy, and all that; and, on my word, it is really diverting. Besides, such a lover may be the means of making one's fortune. He is generous to extremes; and the distance, at which I keep him, will long maintain the fervour of his passion. Nothing can be more pleasant than to observe our behaviour; he treating me with the deference due to a princess, and I him with that gracious condescension due to her fond admirer. Don't conclude from this, however, that he wants understanding: on the contrary, he hath a good deal; but his delicacy and susceptibility are greater; and, what adds to all, I am his first love. You will judge, my dear, what a fine hand may be made of a man so unexperienced in the arts of intrigue. My old keeper, La Roche, knows nothing of the matter; but you know how I manage him. We need only assume at first a proper authority over these animals. Indeed, since that old hypocrite hath been in fear of his amours being discovered, he makes a very prudent and discreet lover. I have dismissed all my other dangles, whose attendance could be of

## 172 LETTER LXIX.

no use, and would serve only to hurt me. And if you consider, I have full enough on my hands. On the one side I have the Marquis, in whose opinion I must take care to preserve for me the proper respect; and on the other, I have the management of La Roche. To receive both, and prevent their ever meeting; to suit one's disposition to those of men so totally different, to amuse each in his own way, and be alternately agreeable to both; to be grave and decent with one; dively, capricious, and wanton with the other, I have certainly enough to do. But I doubt not that I shall acquit myself successfully. And so, my dear Juliet, adieu.

## LETTER LXIX.

*From Leonora to Juliet.*

*Paris, Jan. 7.*

**Y**OU know, my dear, what a horrible fright I have been put into, by that barbarous De la Roche: it is, however, no matter, as it seems to have given things a

\* Several Letters, it seems, passed between Leonora and Juliet, that are not in this Collection.

turn

# LETTER LXIX. 173

turn for the better, by having augmented the Marquis's passion. You will say, doubtless, that I am an artful creature. And I must confess, my talents were put to the test at this critical juncture; my address, however, hath succeeded. Do you know also, that this amour is likely to become a very serious affair? I would give a good deal that Bizac could come to Paris. He would be very useful to me; endeavour, if you can, to send him. He would play the part of a Rival most admirably; a part that would be necessary to give an additional whet to the passion of my young lover; who is, nevertheless, still more enamoured, if possible, than ever. His desires are restrained only by his respect; but I see how severely this restraint is felt. I shall endeavour to compleat my conquest, by displaying a specimen or two of my virtue. You will smile at this; but I assure you, I will lead him a fine dance. I have already refused many of his presents, and these refusals have brought additional ones, which I would not receive till they were forced upon me. A few pretensions to generosity, artfully displayed, prudence without severity, and some fine touches of seeming passion, without its weakness, will effectually subdue him.

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him. If Bizac cannot come, say nothing to him of the matter. You know that confidants are dangerous. Farewell.

L E T T E R LXX.

*From Leonora to Juliet.*

*Paris, Jan. 14.*

**M**Y young Marquis, my dear, hath more difficulties to struggle with than I imagined. A religious sister, a title and family-distinctions, form terrible obstacles to my project. These extraordinary machines, therefore, must be artfully put in motion. Inclosed you have the copy of a letter \*, which I would have you transcribe exactly and carefully with your own hand. You will then direct it to me, and send it by the post, after having given me previous advice of the day it will arrive at Paris; in order that I may plant my batteries, and lay the train accordingly. You understand what I mean, nor need I put an affront on your sagacity by any farther explication of my design. Adieu.

\* This was the copy of that Letter which the Marquis found in Leonora's scrutors,



LETTER LXXI.

*From Leonora to Juliet.*

*Paris, Feb. 15.*

THE letter, my dear, hath produced the intended effect; and yet my Marquis hath not as yet totally surrendered himself, I have quitted the Opera. I know I run a great risque in doing this; but there are occasions on which some risque must be run. So long as I should remain an actress, he would never marry me. — Cannot you come hither? You might be very useful to me. It would be proper for me to appear at least a woman of honest parentage; a relation or so, living in the country, and acquainted with my misfortunes and virtues, coming up to take me out of a certain way of life, would have a good look with it. You take me, Juliet. Endeavour, if possible, to do me this piece of service. You know that the making of my fortune will also make yours; for when I am a woman of quality, you shall be my best friend, my relation, whom I shall take care to raise into a proper esteem and consideration. I do assure you, that when I get rank, I shall take upon me all the airs of it. Nay, I don't know whether I may not become

## 176 L E T T E R LXXII.

become a woman of virtue in good earnest. Those that are, would certainly never have been so, had they experienced our temptations and necessities. Virtue depends altogether on circumstances. Yes, I should certainly endeavour to be virtuous, till I grew tired of it. And you, perhaps, would be so too. Ha! ha! ha! I can but think of the drollery of such a metamorphosis.

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## L E T T E R LXXII.

*From Leonora to Juliet.*

*Paris, March 1.*

**I**F you cannot get away from your tyrannical lover in less than a week, I hope my lot will be decided before your arrival. I have set all my springs to work, have awakened all the desires of my young Marquis, and even brought him so far as to offer a private marriage; which I have refused. You will think me very daring; but he must give me the name and rank of Marchioness de Roselle. I will not bate an inch of it. I have but one more card to play, and then this fortunate affair will be completed. —

I just now learn that he is very ill. —  
What an unlucky accident! If he should  
happen

## L E T T E R LXXIII. 177

happen to die, I shall have done a very foolish thing in quitting the opera. And if he recovers, I may possibly get little by it, as he will of course be surrounded by his family, and I shall be deprived of the opportunity of repairing the fault I have committed, by my too precipitate conduct. I was indeed in too great a hurry: but who could foresee such an accident? It was very wrong in me to refuse the private marriage he offered; as he would have given me two thirds of his estate. I have made here a sad blunder, indeed! Heaven grant he may recover, and get out of the hands of his relations, that I may go to work with him again! Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXIII.

*From the Marquis to Leonora.*

*Paris, April 4.*

**V**ILE and deceitful woman! What words can describe the horror I feel at the detection of your baseness and villainy! Good God! is it possible that I could ever be going to sacrifice my honour, my family, my very being, to such a monster. I have read the letters you wrote to your despicable confidant, Juliet. I see now all

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the springs you have had in play to impose on my understanding. ---- What! when I was in the very agonies of death; when my unhappy passion had brought me to the brink of the grave! Couldst thou at that time regret only the loss of my fortune? Horrid monster! begone for ever from my sight; I cannot contain my resentment: I will revenge upon you the wounds of my friend. Was it for thee, thou miserable wretch, that I could shed his precious blood! You may keep the presents I have made you, as tokens of your own infamy and my weakness. But of all things, be careful to avoid my sight. I forbid you to make any reply; the sight of your hand-writing would even fill me with horror. ----

L E T T E R LXXIV.

*From Madam de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris, April 11.*

**M**R. de Ferval is perfectly recovered; his strength increasing daily, and nothing being left of his wound but a slight scar, the honourable proof of the noblest sentiments. It is in the heart of my brother  
that

that this affair will leave a painful and lasting wound. How deservedly is he to be pitied ! To his apprehensions for poor Ferval, succeeded the joy of his recovery. The mixture of horror, repentance, and gratitude, which agitated his mind for the two first days, was less terrible than that dejection and gloom of melancholy, into which I see him now plunged. He is always at our house, where Ferval came yesterday for the first time. It is not easy to conceive what pains our deserving friend took to suppress every idea relative to his wound. The civilities he paid my brother were uncommonly tender. He proposed numerous projects of amusement, and entertained us with news and little interesting and agreeable topics. Mr. de St. Sever came in, and would have talked to him of his situation and health, at which I observed Ferval to blush extremely. By the most agreeable address, he prevailed on him to change the subject of discourse. My brother sighed, and could not refrain from shedding tears : going out of the room and returning several times. These terrible shocks really make me apprehensive for his life, especially as his health is as yet not perfectly restored. It is necessary that he should have



some amusement ; but as to pleasure, it will be some time before he is capable of its enjoyment. I learn that Leonora is gone to lodge in a distant part of the town, having taken with her all her moveables, with the presents my brother gave her. Would to Heaven we may hear no more of her ! The Marquis never enquires after her, nor hath even mentioned her name these four days. Adieu, my dear friend. I must return to this dear object of my concern and affection. How shall I express to Madam de Ferval the sense of the obligation I am under to her and hers ! Be to her the interpreter of that heart with whose emotions you are so well acquainted.

## L E T T E R   LXXV.

*From Mr. de Ferval to Miss de Ferval.*

*Paris, April 20.*

**Y**OU are acquainted, my dear sister, with what hath lately passed, in consequence of which I am under the most terrible embarrassment. The success of my endeavours hath, indeed, well recompensed me for the pains I have taken. But you know not, nor indeed have I told any one, that to get pos-

possession of Leonora's letters I was obliged to pay for them. The purchase of them, indeed, was owing to the insolence and imprudence of Leonora; for without that I should never have obtained them; having an invincible repugnance to corrupt any one's servants so far as this. On this head I needed not the advice my mother gave me in one of her letters; my heart alone would have dictated the like counsel. Luckily, however, Juliet being pressed for money, applied to Leonora; from whom she received no very polite refusal. Leonora behaved to her indeed as if she had been already the Marchioness de Roselle. Enraged at this refusal, and under a pressing necessity for money, Juliet listened to the insinuations of Leonora's woman; and, in order not to be obliged to dispose of her moveables, offered me the letters in question. Three hundred guineas was the price of them. I had not that sum by me, and did not chuse to apply to Madam de St. Sever, for reasons I need not tell you. It was necessary, therefore, to borrow them. I had not time to make much choice in the lender, but addressed myself to La Roche; of whose intrigue and resentment you have heard. His anger, which still continued, stood me

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in good stead; knowing the use to which it was to be applied, he lent it me without interest. But as he is no less covetous than revengeful, he is very pressing for the repayment. I think I ought not to inform Mr. de St. Sever of this circumstance; nor, indeed, could I take upon myself to speak to him on the subject. Ought I to speak of it to my mother? You know what repugnance she expressed at my employing such means. But could I possibly do otherwise? She must know of it. ---- Advise me, my dear sister, what to do, in order to extricate myself from this difficulty. You will oblige me by a speedy reply. Adieu.

## L E T T E R LXXVI.

*From Miss de Ferval to her Brother.*

*Ferval, April 23.*

**T**HE cause of your embarrassment, my dear brother, is so honourable for you, that I cannot forbear partaking of it from the bottom of my heart. You have acted the part of an hero, and, what affects me still more, that of a friend. You ought by no means to mention this affair, either to the Count or Countess de St. Sever. I am not  
insen-

insensible that, on the first view of this matter, they ought rather to repay this money than you: but there are some actions which, however just, are disreputable. And such I think an application to them would appear: for you ought not in any case to dispose of the money of others without their consent. I am also against speaking of it to my mother. I well know what her heart would readily dictate; but she is by no means in circumstances to be generous. The mediocrity of her fortune, the expences she is at, for you and for her family, which she maintains in a reputable manner, are sufficient motives for economy. I know perfectly well the state of her affairs, as I am frequently both her book and cash-keeper, and I know she cannot furnish you with that money, without putting herself to great inconveniences. It would be wrong, therefore, to give her any uneasiness about it; but tomorrow I will send you, privately, and by a safe hand, my diamond ear-rings. They are my own, as my aunt gave them to me on her death-bed; so that I may dispose of them as I please. I shall endeavour to prevent their being missed; but if it should so happen that my mother should ask me after them, I shall

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tell her to what use I have put them ; and I am certain she will not blame me. Return me no thanks for this gift ; as I make it with the greatest pleasure, in that the motive which reduces you to the want of it, is truly excellent. Indeed, I glory in being your sister. I cannot forbear observing, however, that the means you have employed were a little hazardous, and were such as it is very disagreeable to have recourse to. But you say it was necessary ; and I can only lament that necessity. What a monster is vice, that sometimes compells even virtue itself to make use of her artifices ! Adieu, my dear brother, I am very sensible of the confidence you place in me. The sollicitude and admiration you have lately excited in me, have been productive of the most impatient desire once more to see and embrace you.

I cannot, however, conceal my apprehensions on your account from Leonora's resentment : minds so debased as hers are capable of any thing.

LET-



## LETTER LXXVII.

*From Mr. de Ferval to his Sister.**Paris, April 28.*

WHAT goodness, what prudence, my dear sister, have you not shewn in the sacrifice you have made me. I received the ear-rings safe, and have sold them. But though I have discharged the debt, my uneasiness at depriving you of them still remains. To possess a sensibility, a generosity of soul, without a fortune, is honourable; but it is nevertheless afflicting. Be not under any uneasiness about Leonora; revenge is too lofty a passion for a mind like hers. The Marquis, who has taken a melancholy turn, which much affects me, wrote yesterday to Valville. I am sorry; but I have cause to think that, unworthy as Valville is to be the friend of Roselle, the differences which have happened between them, and are now compromising, will unite them more closely than ever. I pity the unfortunate Marquis; who seeks to attach himself to some object, in order to fill up that vacancy he must necessarily feel in his heart, from the expulsion of Leonora.

I em-

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I embrace you, my sister, my friend ; be assured of my affection, and accept my acknowledgments.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

*From the Marquis to Valville,*

*Paris, April 27.*

**W**ILL you then, my dear Valville, abandon me ? After so great a punishment and humiliation as I have undergone, your displeasure must surely subside. I acknowledge my errors, I abjure them, and intreat your pardon. How unhappy am I ! I now perceive the vile object of my passion, which has been the source of so much trouble, was unworthy of it. I detest it ; but my heart still bleeds. Come, my dear friend, and restore to me that strength which I have lost. I have great hopes from your assistance, of which I stand in the utmost need.

L E T-

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L E T T E R LXXIX.

*From Valville to the Marquis.*

*Paris, April 27.*

I Thought, my dear Marquis, that this flight of yours would not hold long : I am not sorry for the experiment you have tried : It will make you wiser. You have now awaked from an extravagant dream. Forget this act of folly as soon as possible. I will come and see you this evening ; and to-morrow I intend to introduce you to a most charming lady indeed, whose entertainments are magnificent, and whose house is a scene of pleasure ; I mean, to Madam d'Asterre. But let us hear no more of your romantic notions ; if these are not left off, I will have nothing to say. Your illness has considerably affected me. Adieu ; and believe yourself more beholden to your good fortune than to your prudence.

L E T.

## LETTER LXXX.

*From Valville to the Marquis.**Paris, April 29.*

I Find, my dear Marquis, you cannot keep from running into extremes, of all which, Misanthropy is the worst. I would rather see you indulge the passion of love. Yesterday I carried you to the Marchioness d'Asterre, who had the best of company, and, among them, some beauties ; and you enjoyed some advantages from the Marchioness, which another person would with difficulty have obtained. Yet you made not the least return, not even a lively sentiment. Your behaviour was a cold politeness, attended with an insensibility which disconcerted me in every thing. I had told you, that you could never appear under more favourable auspices. The Marchioness is an amiable woman, and I was myself held some time in suspense between her and Madam de Clarival ; but for some reasons of convenience I decided in favour of the latter, and I pique myself on constancy. I have laid it down as a maxim, that it is the greatest cruelty to deceive a woman. I can unite pleasure with honour.

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our. Return then to us, and to yourself, and again enter the world. I will give you a second meeting to-morrow at Madam d'Asterre's, with whom I am determined you shall form an attachment. Don't I deserve your thanks for so generously providing for you a place, which every amiable man in Paris would rejoice to obtain, and which perhaps in a few months I might wish to procure for myself? Farewell, Marquis, till to-morrow.

## LETTER LXXXI.

*From the Marquis to Valville.*

*Paris, April 30.*

I Thank you, my dear friend, for the trouble you have taken, and acknowledge your friendship in the advice you give me. I would, however, wish to banish a remembrance which will embitter my whole life. I have resolved never more to speak of that unhappy, that detestable passion of which I have been the victim. I endeavour to avoid the thought of it; but this cruel effort recoils back on me with the utmost violence. I will no longer give way to love. I abhor



it. But how great a conflict do I sustain, and how happy was I while I continued in my error! Forgive this regret for a felicity, which, though I thought it real, I find exists no longer. My heart, alas! was accustomed to this charm; but I seem now to be lost in an abyss of vacuity. Shall I venture to open my heart to you? Did not honour, did not that sentiment to which I will sacrifice every other, forbid me, I should be ready to resume my former bonds, and become less miserable than I am at present. — Wretched! vile! creature! I will hate her; I will despise her. But what am I saying? Hatred! Contempt! — No; anger alone dictated these expressions. — Alas! Leonora! — Thus far I had written this morning, when my emotion disabled me from holding the pen, which dropped from my hand. I have since been reading it over, and am ashamed of the inconsistency of it. However, it manifests the state of my mind, for which, my dear Valville, let me at least have your pity. Think, what can be more cruel or more mortifying, than to be obliged to hate and despise that object which we have passionately loved. I could almost imagine, that  
 self-

self-affection hath imparted fresh arrows to Love, to wound my ulcerated heart. To say the truth, my ideas are so confused, that I know not how to separate them; and you could not conceive the different emotions with which I am distracted. Rage, love, shame, each, in its turn, suggests some proposal, which, after a moment's reflection, I blush to think of.

Do not be under any fear of my committing any disgraceful action. Honour will do more than reason, and I should rather choose to die than see Leonora again. It is for my own ease alone that I would banish her from my memory. But, though I can answer for myself, my wounds still bleed; and new connections will by no means heal it. For the rest of my life I will bid adieu to love, which the cruel experience I have had of it has rendered odious to me; and if I am once free, the ladies you speak of will have little influence. Besides, what are those sentiments, which you would cherish in me towards Madam d'Asterre? I am a man of honour, and if she is a woman of virtue, what can all your attachment mean? Her mode of life is too tumultuous for me. What could you have intended with respect to Madam

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de Clarival, whose rank and behaviour imply that of a woman of character, and whose husband you are intimately acquainted with? Permit me, dear Valville, to decline this new connection. I will return to my sister's, I will keep at home, and, if I have sometimes your company, I shall be satisfied. I am sensible I am acting a very dull character in the world, and cannot long sustain it. Come and see me to-morrow, if you possibly can; but I must be excused from visiting Madam d'Asterre.

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## L E T T E R LXXXII.

*From Valville to the Marquis.*

*Paris, April 30.*

**W**HAT strange ideas, my dear Marquis, do you give way to? They are totally void of common sense. It is a pity; but you think differently from every one. Enjoy life once more, be happy, be tranquil, and suffer yourself to be amused. This is all that is required of you. Surely you do not know in what manner Madam d'Asterre has distinguished you, notwithstanding your reserve and coldness. She has asked me whether she should not see you again this evening; and

and from a knowledge of circumstances, I can venture to assure you, that it is in your power to make a conquest: What gothic notions can you have to impede your progress? There is no doubt that Madam d'Asterre is a woman of honour. But what then? That may not prevent her from loving a man of gallantry? I see you do not know what is meant by honour in polite life. A man who is willing to pass his time agreeably, chooses from among the most amiable women, one who will suit him best. Beauty, merit, and wit are not alone sufficient to decide his choice; there must likewise be a concurrence of circumstances. For instance: Suppose a husband on whom we may rely with safety; suppose, too, that we can make him our friend; that there is nothing disagreeable at home, but, on the contrary, no expences spared for procuring pleasures: If then all these things can be found united, our next step must be, to settle matters with the lady. If, after an attempt of some weeks, we should not find our measures succeed, we must turn our views elsewhere; but if our affairs are prosperous, we take our arrangements accordingly. A woman ought, by all means, to exact of her lover a decency of



behaviour, a shew of regard for her husband, and as much constancy towards herself as possible. If, after all this, the parties should nevertheless grow tired of each other, an honourable retreat should be made, but no open rupture must ever happen; and at the worst, supposing a rupture to be unavoidable, care must even then be taken to manage it as privately, and with as little confusion as circumstances will allow. As this is the duty of a man of gallantry, so that of the woman must consist in being faithful to her lover as long as they like each other; in not having more than one object of affection at the same time; in preserving the fairest appearances; in behaving to her husband with politeness; in never attempting with rudeness to detach him from any favourite connection, from which he cannot without difficulty be disengaged; in avoiding even the knowledge of such connections; and, if her husband be a man who knows something of the world, in rendering her own adorers subservient to his interest. Such is the picture of an amiable woman, a woman of address and abilities, and one with whom it is worth while to be acquainted. You cannot be so ignorant as not to know, that every thing new turns on pleasure,



# LETTER LXXXIII. 195

pleasure, as the grand pivot of every affair of importance, and which, if it cannot be attained, must at least be counterfeited. These are the first principles of society in the great world. I blush for you, Marquis, to think where you can have lived, to have picked up such antiquated notions as you entertain. It must certainly be in the country, for I cannot suspect you have degraded yourself so much at Paris, as to visit the clubs of mechanics. I will not be denied, I must this evening, by some means or other, get you to Madam d'Asterre's. Rid yourself, therefore, of your melancholy ideas; and, till night, adieu.

LETTER LXXXIII.  
From Madam de St. Sever to Madam de Narton.

Paris, April 22.  
As you deserve, my dear friend, every instance of gratitude on my part, the least return I can make is an attention to inform you of everything. My brother continues much the same, and is almost constantly with me; but notwithstanding the satisfaction his

presence of Mr. de Valville, I find he stands in need of amusements and pleasures, which I know not how to procure him. It was with the greatest difficulty I prevailed on him yesterday to accompany Mr. de Valville, who came to introduce him to a lady, who keeps the most agreeable company; and, though he at last consented to it, he returned as melancholy as he went out. His whole time passes in solitary walks, in distracting dreams, in sighs, or in silence. His health is far from being re-established, and he has a disorder at his stomach, which gives me much uneasiness. What greater tyrants can exist than our own passions? I am, however, my dear friend, very glad he did not follow my advice in one respect, in a marriage with Miss de St. Albin. Could you have thought that a lady of so mild a disposition, so well educated, so reserved, and in whom I thought I had discovered a fund of virtue, should ever have given any uneasiness to her husband; and yet I am told she is no longer the same person she was; that her caprice and obstinacy are insupportable; and that in her family she is an absolute tyrant. Her first proceeding was to dismiss from the family of Baron d'Orbe every one of the old servants, and

servants, and in particular a poor valet-de-chambre, who had faithfully served both the father and son for half a century, and who, thus turned away with the rest, is destitute even of the means of subsistence. This was only her first step; she next quarrelled with her brother-in-law, and with a female relation of her husband's, who is both aged and infirm, had lived in the family for twenty years, and who is now obliged to retire to a convent, though she has not a sufficiency to find herself in common necessities. As this last measure was transacted during the absence of the Baron, he could not refrain from bursting into the utmost rage at his return; after which he wrote to the poor woman, to excuse his wife's behaviour, and to invite her to return; but she has since told me herself, that she would rather be reduced to the lowest degree of indigence, than expose herself any more to her former mortifications; and according to the account she gave me of the Baroness, nothing can exceed her obstinacy and cruelty. As she gives herself little trouble about other people, the expences are excessively increased merely on her account; and, as she is perpetually at variance with all her husband's friends,

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the house is one continued scene of confusion and disorder. And, what is worst, because she neither plays nor frequents public places, she imagines herself a woman of the most sublime virtue; and because she makes a parade of not neglecting her devotions, she thinks no one must come in competition with her. I have had such a description of her as made me tremble, and I return thanks to Heaven that the execution of my designs was prevented. As I am now sensible how much you were in the right, nothing could give me greater pleasure than to receive a sister from your hands. But of this I must not at present venture to think.

Adieu, my dear friend, and be assured of my esteem and regard. Let me be remembered, I entreat of you, to Madam de Ferval and her daughters. I congratulate you on the enjoyment of such agreeable company. The obligations I owe to that family, shall never be forgotten.

I am extremely sorry for the unfortunate marriage of the Baron d'Orbe; I pity him the more, as I know him to be a man of



the house is one continued scene of confusion and disorder. What a wretched place!

From Madam de Nartoh to Madam de St. Sever.

Varennes, April 25.

I can easily perceive, my dear Countess, how great must be your uneasiness at your brother's situation, which is really pitiable; but though this disorder may probably be of some continuance, I have great hopes that he will recover at last. Avoid paying him under any restraint: Liberty is now what he most requires. He is averse, you tell me, to amusements; do not offer any violence to him on that head; they would become more insupportable; and time alone can work an alteration. Let him go on as his inclination leads him; the experience he has had will ripen his judgment, and prevent future acts of folly. I am most concerned for his health, and could wish he was in the country, where the most natural recreations are to be found, and where the air will contribute greatly to his amendment.

I am extremely sorry for the unfortunate marriage of the Baron d'Orbe; I pity him the more, as I know him to be a man of



merit: But I cannot, at the same time, help rejoicing, that you have been undeceived with respect to his lady. Nothing else, however, can well be expected from the education she received. That dissimulation which is inculcated into youth, is the source of every vice; while a puerile, superficial devotion contracts the mind, and renders it incapable of impression. The portrait of this one lady may serve for every professed devotee; and the idea of self-superiority which they possess, generally renders their company disagreeable. Indulging slander under the pretext of charity, pride under that of humility; prodigality to themselves, avarice towards others, affectation, bitterness, ignorance, stubbornness, and cruelty; their character may be drawn in a few words. But from whence can these ill qualities arise? Possibly from a bad foundation; but were it ever so good, it would be spoilt by such an education as Madam d'Orbe has received. Of that rational and sublime piety, which is at once the source and perfection of every virtue, I am very certain, no idea has been given her. She hath been taught betimes to conceal her faults, but no pains have been taken to eradicate them. Her mind hath  
never

never been cultivated; in which superstition  
 has taken the place of religion, and pride  
 that of greatness of soul. Having never em-  
 ployed herself in reading or obtaining any  
 knowledge, she hath confined her attention  
 to music, her toilette, and the little austeri-  
 ties of a convent; and having likewise been  
 told, that provided she assumed an air of re-  
 serve in the presence of the men, if she held  
 her tongue, if she always sat upright, and  
 did not neglect the decorums of dress, she  
 would be quite an accomplished woman; she  
 therefore took all this upon trust, and mar-  
 ried for no other purpose than to become her  
 own mistress, and indulge her revenge for  
 the restraint she had so long undergone. Be-  
 sides, as she had so often heard it repeated,  
 that marriage must precede love, she gave  
 herself very little anxiety to whom her hand  
 should be given; and indeed it was given to  
 a man whom she had never spoken to before.  
 This is the history of an education, of which  
 I need not tell you the consequences. It  
 were much to be wished such examples were  
 more rare. If you desire your brother to be  
 happy, never choose for him a wife thus edu-  
 cated; such austere precepts are not to be  
 relied on. He is amiable; and, therefore,  
 heaven some

some woman who is amiable also. Fortune seems rather jealous of Nature, as she seldom dispenses her favours to those who possess merit and accomplishments. What a happiness would it be for him to find all those accomplishments united, of which I am certain, he will not be found unworthy.

me. Mr. d'Orbe, brother to my brother, is a few days in the

country at Madam de Saint Sever's. He is still declined it, but in consequence of your

### LETTER LXXXV.

From Madam de Saint Sever to Madam de Narton.

valled on him, and he set out this morning. Paris, January 18.

**W**HAT a lively description, my dear, have you given of these pretended devotees; and how contemptible do they appear! Mr. d'Orbe, quite incensed at his wife's behaviour, intends to send her back to a convent, which must be the greater mortification to him, as he always thought it was impossible to find a truly accomplished woman except in the recesses of a cloister. But grossly as he will affront every mother who dares to take the care of her children on herself, I pity his error and his sincerity. I pity him the more, as I myself was likewise deceived by the same person. The better judgment which good sense and experience enabled

enabled you to form of her, has at length convinced me, that a knowledge of the world cannot be obtained without having lived in it and seen it. This knowledge I am not possessed of; but you are; and through you, as a medium, it may be of service to me. Mr. de Valville has made a proposal for my brother to spend a few days in the country, at Madam d'Asterre's. He at first declined it; but in consequence of your advice with respect to the air, I have since prevailed on him, and he set out this morning. From this little excursion, added to your care, I have great hopes of his recovery. I must not omit mentioning the assiduities of that worthy young gentleman, Mr. de Ferval. From the interviews I have had with him, it appears that his affection for his mother and his sisters is the most ardent that can be conceived. It is an elogium to the whole family, who are united to each other in a manner as singular as it is respectable. Adieu, my dear friend; and believe me sincerely yours.

I beg to take the care of his sincerity. I pity his error and his sincerity. I pity him the more, as I myself was likewise deceived by the same person. The better judgment which good sense and experience enabled



## LETTER LXXXVI.

*From the Marquis to Valville.**Paris, May 3.*

**E**XCUSE, my friend, my precipitate departure; but indeed I could not stay any longer. Can this be called good company? Let me assert that Leonora, and those on an equality with her, contemptible as they undoubtedly are, are less contemptible than those women I have been introduced to. The former stand to public view, and openly proclaim themselves to be what they are; a misfortune to those who suffer themselves to be deceived by them, and to me in particular, who have been so cruelly drawn away. But as to your women . . . I could not have thought your heart had been so debased as to offer them your esteem. What! to cover the baseness of guilt by the cloak of dignity, without remorse, without a blush; to consider perfidiousness, nay, adultery itself, under the notion of politeness; and to have lost the very idea of Virtue! Can a more abominable character be existing in Nature? I will confess, that curiosity, added to your efforts, was the motive which determined me



to accompany you to Madam d'Asterre's, where I was desirous of seeing these people of fashion. I have seen them; but, so far from pleasing me, they gave me the greatest disgust. I have taken particular notice of you when engaged with Madam de Clarival; and, if I know myself, I can venture to assure you, that there is no affection either on your part or on hers. The connection which you have with her, which you mistake for love, that terrible passion which almost deprives us of the use of our reason, and in some measure renders our faults excusable, is nothing more than a complication of vanity and disorder. These *arrangements*, as you are pleased to term them, supposing them not to be criminal, are certainly the most dull and trifling occupations which can employ the attention of a man of gallantry. How ridiculous is it to make parade of a passion which you do not feel, and to be ever dancing attendance on a woman, whom fashion alone can prevail on you to acknowledge, but whom in fact you blush for. Time thus spent, is absolutely worse than lost. Madam de Clarival's vanity is flattered by the conquest she thinks she has made, and to outward appearance you are not inconstant: On the other hand,

hand, you find some conveniencies resulting from your connection with her. But I clearly perceive, that these mutual advantages are reciprocally purchased at the dear expence of tranquillity. Nay, you have yourself told me, that though you could not refuse such a sacrifice if it was demanded, it would be with reluctance you could consent to pass two days with her alone in a rural retirement. Consider the word : a Sacrifice. With what propriety could you use this expression, if you were really in love ? Does not Love produce the highest raptures ? And can Love ever be found united with indifference and fatigue ? — What ! do you even dread to undergo, for two days only, what a Lover would never have thought could be purchased at a price too dear. I must tell you again, you are not in love. Leave then this intrigue, which is not less criminal than disgraceful. You have told me, that Mr. de Clarival is your friend, and that he has given proof of his friendship. Is this, then, the return you make him, thus to betray him, deliberately to betray him, and to commit the most cruel injury that can be offered him, in seducing his wife, whom you do not love. You must excuse me, Valville, but

I cannot

I cannot think this behaviour is consistent with the character of an honest man. I am not going to make a formal declamation against vice, as I am sensible this would be of little use with respect to you. Not as a preacher, but as an inhabitant of the world, I now tell you, that no crime is more atrocious than adultery, which draws after it so many melancholy consequences, deceit, perfidy, the ruin of families, and their indelible disgrace. I will have nothing more said about Madam d'Asterre, whose advances to me were really indecent. I acknowledge it was to disengage myself from her, that I came away this morning before the family was risen. She may think of me what she pleases, but I shall be very indifferent about her opinion. I would rather appear ridiculous to her, than be really criminal. I cannot imagine how these women have it in their power to seduce? For the wife of another man I can only conceive respect if she is worthy of it, and contempt if she is unworthy. Even if you take away the idea of the vice, which however is not a very easy matter; yet how can you possibly rely on the fidelity of her who is unfaithful to her husband. I have fallen into great errors, I allow; errors that

will

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will occasion me bitter reflections during my whole life : But I have at the same time the consolation, that I have nothing worse than errors to reproach myself with. My heart was led astray, but it was not corrupted. Let me repeat it ; Leonora, the infamous Leonora, whom I ought to detest, whom perhaps I yet love, but of whom my contempt will prevent my danger, Leonora now appears less culpable. Do not ask me any more to return to Madam d'Asterre's. It is impossible for me to comply with your request. You may rely on the most inviolable secrecy, of which my own interest is a security.

## L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

*From Valville to the Marquis.*

*Montesson, May 5.*

**I**T is all over with you, Marquis: I will positively have nothing more to say to you; I can do no more. Since you have begun so gravely to preach about morality and goodness, I must give you up. Yet I cannot help thinking, it is a pity that a man of so distinguished a rank, so noble a fortune, wit, and personal accomplishments,



ments, should throw himself away in this manner. They might have been brought to better account in the world, if that stupid passion of yours for Leonora, and the illness which followed it, had not turned your brain. I thought so, as soon as I took up your long Pastoral Letter, for I can give it no other name. Let me have no more such epistles: You know I never go to hear a sermon, because I am always tired before it is concluded; but your letters are ten times worse. I am sorry for your situation, Marquis; and the only excuse I could make for you to Madam d'Asterre, was an open acknowledgment of it. Don't be afraid, I shall give you no more invitations; you have cured me pretty well of them. You have caused me mortification enough, and I have been sufficiently rallied on your account. What think you then, if your letter had been shewn? Adieu. Use the means for your recovery; let your ideas be less gloomy; and accommodate your principles to the mode of the age. This short lesson is worth all you have been preaching about. *Principles*, have I said? What a formal expression! Surely the contagion has infected me. Adieu.



## LETTER LXXXVIII.

*From the Marquis to Valville.**Paris, May 6.*

LOVE has led me astray, and friendship would corrupt me. I see, Valville, you turn my reflections into ridicule. Have I asserted any thing that Nature hath not implanted in every heart, in yours as well as mine. Hath a renunciation of an error prevented me from returning back to myself, and from disclosing my heart to a friend? I have been guilty of faults, and the consolation only remains, that I shall be more cautious for the future. Envy me not in this. Those principles and sentiments, with which I was more and more penetrated in proportion as I discovered my faults, prevented them from becoming criminal. With what satisfaction do I now reflect, that in the midst of all my irregularities my heart continued uncorrupted, and that integrity and the love of virtue are still happily preserved. To these valuable sentiments am I indebted, that in the greatest heat of my passion, I did not forget the duties I owed to friendship, to a sister, and a family, and that I avoided a secret marriage,

marriage, of which I should now have been ashamed, and which would have almost brought me to despair. To these sentiments am I indebted, that, after having discovered that execrable perfidy, I left in Leonora's hands those repeated presents of which a mean revenge, like that of La Roche, might have deprived her. I am indebted also to the same sentiments, that I have resisted the last and most violent efforts of love, at the moment when, though I discovered her baseness, I could have submitted to her yoke. And from the same cause hath arisen that just aversion which I have to those criminal connections, which constitute your pleasures. When I look back on my former life, these sentiments are the only part of my conduct which I can approve. As you have doubtless made trial, tell me honestly, is there not a pleasing charm in good actions? Have you not found that they are attended with their own reward? Have they not given you an inward and compleat satisfaction, such as may be expected from happiness? Had you ever a scruple before the performance of a good action, or the least remorse after it? No, my friend, you had not. Goodness is still goodness, even to the most corrupted minds. I have

found from experience, that the passions have no other effect than that of agitating and disordering the soul, and that the only result of your pleasures was giddiness and intoxication. Virtue, on the other hand, gives a tranquillity and satisfaction to the soul; and, by rendering it contented, renders it happy: Virtue alone can accomplish this work. The passions have but one object, and pleasures are confined to the moment of enjoyment: But virtue embraces the whole man; it fulfils the duty of every station, whether of a citizen, a husband, a father, or a friend; it is of use in every circumstance of life; and the more it is practised, the more it is beloved. Is it then in passions or pleasures, or is it in virtue, that happiness must be sought for?

I presume I have tired you; read therefore no more. It is for myself alone I am writing. You and the rest of the men of fashion, who found your title on a contempt of every thing, which, before you were born, attracted the veneration of mankind, would willingly contribute your endeavours to annihilate the idea of principles. Do not, I beg, make use of so sacred an expression, which your lips would profane. But if there be in society any duties to fulfil, any rights

rights to regard, or any rules to follow, some *principles* of morality will be found necessary. I am not speaking either of religion or laws, a discussion of which would exceed my abilities. I am too profane for the one, and I have not capacity for the other. I allude only to morals in general, of which every man is soon instructed and convinced, if he will but take some little pains, and give an honest decision. You tell me, with an air of assurance almost oracular, that we must accommodate our principles to the mode of the age. I do not mean to set up for a censor before the age of inheritance; but I will venture to say, that our principles are to be accommodated to right reason and sound morality, which are the same at every age and in every country. On this maxim must be formed the man, whether he be considered as the friend or the protector of his fellow creatures.

What can be expected from him, who regulates the system of his conduct by the mode of the age, and by obeying the empire of that mode? What can be expected, but that either he will debase himself to slavery in the midst of licentiousness; or that his very existence shall not be his own; that his virtues  
 should

should arise only from compact, and his merit from ceremony and politeness. And yet this is exactly your case, and that of every man of mode. Referring every thing to the vain desire of pleasing, elated with childish pretensions and trifling successes, and confining your whole attention to dress and behaviour, you are ignorant of every real duty; you have no idea of those sacred ties which extend and fortify our existence; and you will ever remain destitute of a country, of friends, of wives, and of children. With such maxims as you espouse, we may become the epicure, the coxcomb, or the idol of the day: With virtue and morality, we may become the member of society; and, if circumstances shall permit, the father of posterity. To this honour I do not pretend; but, in order to be happy, I will endeavour to be good, to be honest, and to be virtuous. Misfortunes have brought my reason to maturity: And if age can be said to consist in acquiring knowledge before the usual time, and daring to make use of it, I may be placed on an equality with those whose age is far advanced. Adieu.

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## LETTER LXXXIX.

*From the Countess de Saint-Sever to Madam  
de Narton.*

*Paris, May 4.*

**Y**esterday, my dear friend, my brother returned to Paris. I know not what was the reason of so quick a departure; but he is far from being more chearful than when he left me. On the contrary, he is so melancholy and so weak, that I am under great uneasiness. As it is absolutely necessary to do our utmost to prevent any ill consequences from his present desponding situation, the physician has advised him to go and drink the waters either of Plombieres or Bains\*. I shall give the preference to the last mentioned place, because my brother will then be in your neighbourhood, and my anxiety on his account will be greatly relieved. I beg, my dear friend, that you will take the trouble of providing him with a convenient apartment near the waters, which it is recommended to him to drink at the spring head. You will excuse him from residing at your seat, which is rather at too great a di-

\* Bains is in Lorraine, at the distance of four leagues from Plombieres.

stance.

stance. Adieu. I envy my brother's situation, because he will have so many opportunities of enjoying your company.

## L E T T E R X C.

*From Madam de Narton to Madam de Saint Sever.*

*Varennnes, May 7.*

**Y**OU have given me, my dear Countess, the greatest pleasure, in acquainting me with your brother's intentions of coming to Bains. I do not, however, see any inconveniences that would result from his accepting an apartment here, as it is not above half a league from the Wells. I drink the waters myself; they are always brought to me, and I never found they were less efficacious here than at the spring. I have, however, complied with your request, and have engaged a convenient lodging. Every thing is in readiness for the arrival of the Marquis, whom we will endeavour to amuse in the best manner we are able. This will perhaps be the most essential part of the cure; if he can once recover his cheerfulness, he will get rid of the rest of his illness: And to this end, however disgusting the artificial amusements of Paris may

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may have been, our pleasures, which are simple and natural, may be more successful. I have great expectations likewise from the satisfaction he will receive from the family of Madam de Ferval. Rest, therefore, assured, that I shall neglect nothing, which can possibly contribute to the re-establishment of his former health.

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## L E T T E R XCI.

*From Madam de Saint Sever to Madam de Narton.*

*Paris May 28.*

**M**Y brother proposes, my dear friend, to set out for Bains to-morrow morning. It is an equal happiness to him and to myself, that he will have so good an opportunity of receiving assistance from you. His melancholy situation will affect you much; but I have greater hopes from those obliging attentions you will afford him, than from the waters. The amiable Mr. de Ferval will accompany him. This inestimable friend, whose zeal is ever the same, has made all the necessary preparations for the journey. As

the physician has given his opinion that it is best to drink the waters every morning at the spring, my brother intreats you will excuse him from residing with you; but he will nevertheless have the pleasure of seeing you every day. I will not insult your friendship by recommending my brother to your care; whose departure, from what cause I know not, gives me the greatest satisfaction. I entertain the most sanguine hopes of seeing him, at his return to Paris, perfectly re-established in health and tranquillity; at least I have the consolation of reflecting, that he cannot be in better hands.

*END of the FIRST VOLUME.*

